ON SENECA'S "AD MARCIAM"

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C. E. MANNING

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BY

C. E. MANNING

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PREFACE

A commentary on Seneca's *Ad Marciam* needs little excuse. The last commentary on any of the *consolationes* to appear in English was the small but invaluable work on the *De Brevitate Vitae* and *Consolationes Ad Polybium* and *Ad Helviam* by J. D. Duff which appeared in 1915, and no full scale commentary on the *Ad Marciam* has been seen since Favez' edition in 1928. Since that time a number of new approaches have assisted our understanding of what Seneca was trying to say, and have helped us to a juster appreciation of the seeming inconsistencies in Seneca's arguments. Rudolf Kassel and Constantine Grollios have demonstrated the influence of generic tradition on the form of the work whilst structural studies by Pierre Grimal and Karlhans Abel have shown the importance of viewing any Senecan argument in its context rather than as a statement of principle *in vacuo*. Others such as Mlle Guillemin have demonstrated Seneca's concern to teach, and the way in which works are tailored to meet the paedeutic situation. It seemed therefore reasonable to attempt a fuller commentary on the *Ad Marciam* which incorporated some of the fruits of scholarly research in divergent areas, however inadequate that attempt might be.

In a first work it is appropriate to record many debts of gratitude. My teachers at the University of Southampton were always most encouraging and incisive, and I am particularly grateful to Professor A. E. Douglas and Mr C. W. Whitaker for showing me the possibilities of working on Seneca. My colleagues at the University of Canterbury have always been interested in discussing my work, and I should mention here my fellow Stoic Dr. R. P. Bond, Dr. L. C. Watson of the University of Sydney, Professor D. A. Kidd who made some valuable comments on textual cruces, and Professor K. H. Lee who was likewise encouraging and helpful. The bulk of the research was carried out while on study leave as a Fellow of the Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities in the University of Edinburgh in 1976-7. I am grateful to the University of Canterbury for providing for this leave, and to the University of Edinburgh which provided such congenial surroundings in which to work. Professor William Beattie was kindness itself, and Mrs Margaret Swift organised accommodation with quiet efficiency. Colleagues in the department of Humanity, Dr H. Hine and Mr J. G. Wright both read preliminary drafts of the commentary and made helpful suggestions for improvement, whilst Mr J. G.

Howie in the Greek department willingly shared his knowledge of consolatory themes in Greek Literature. Other scholars who have been of considerable encouragement are Mr C. D. N. Costa of the University of Birmingham and Professor Francis Cairns of the University of Liverpool.

I should also thank my wife who typed part of the first draft, and Prudence Buttery who produced the final version with both efficiency and good humour. Finally, I should like to thank Professor A. D. Leeman who encouraged me to publish the work in its present form, and made valuable suggestions about the scope of the introduction. Needless to say, I am responsible for the deficiencies still apparent in the work.

THE DATE AND PURPOSE OF THE AD MARCIAM

The biography of L. Annaeus Seneca is well-known. There is no need to discuss in detail the life of the second son of a provincial rhetor who early developed both ill-health and a taste for philosophy. Others have dealt with the beginnings of his political career, his prominence as an orator under Gaius, his exile early in Claudius' reign, his recall at Agrippina's request to be Nero's tutor, his years as one of that emperor's principal advisors, his retirement in 62, and his enforced suicide in 65 after the discovery of the Pisonean conspiracy.[1] What is worth noting is that the connection between Seneca's literary and philosophic work and his life as a statesman is difficult to determine. Syme and Griffin[2] have pointed out that without Tacitus' account we should know scarcely anything of Seneca's political activity, about which he says little, and it is equally true that external sources give us little assistance in determining the chronology of his work.

The *Ad Marciam* is no exception to this general rule. There is no external evidence for dating the work, and arguments on this question have to be drawn from the work itself. Such evidence as there is can be classified into the following three categories:

1) References to external events which can be accurately dated from other sources;

2) References to the lives of people whom Seneca discusses in the work which enables conclusions to be drawn about their ages and the like;

3) Subjective reactions to the work itself, its contents and its silences, which can be compared with other works of Seneca for which a definite date can be established.

Despite the availability of evidence from all these sources, scholars even in this century have suggested widely differing dates for the composition of the work.[3]

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[1] R. Waltz, *La vie politique de Sénèque*, Paris 1909; P. Grimal, *Sénèque*, Paris, 1966, pp. 1-35; M. Griffin, *Seneca, a philosopher in politics*, Oxford, 1976, pp. 1-128, *inter alia.*

[2] R. Syme, *Tacitus*, Oxford, 1958, p. 552, cited by Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

[3] C. Buresch, Consolationum a Graecis Romanisque scriptorum historia critica, in *Leipziger Studien* 9, 1886, pp. 111-12; E. Albertini, *La composition dans les ouvrages philosophiques de Sénèque*, Paris, 1923, p. 14, n. 1; C. Favez (ed.), Seneca, *Ad Marciam de Consolatione*, Paris, 1928, pp. XI-XV; J. W. Basore (ed.), Seneca, *Moral Essays*, vol. II, London and Camb., Mass., 1932, p. viii; A. Traglia (ed.), Seneca, *La Consolazione à Marcia*, Rome, 1965, p. 7; K. Abel, *Bauformen in Senecas Dialogen*, Heidelberg, 1967, p. 159; M. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 397; all

The first category of references enables us to set a terminus post quem of 39/40 for the work. The *consolatio* was proferred to Marcia in the third year after her son's death (1.7). Since her bereavement she had found no refuge in literary pursuits, an interest inherited from her father Cremutius Cordus (1.6), and yet she had played a considerable part in the republication of her father's historical writings (1.3-1.4) which had not been permitted until Gaius' principate (Suet. *Gaius* 16).

A reference of the second kind seems to rule out the possibility that the work was written during Seneca's exile. When Seneca writes to Marcia "*In qua...urbe, di boni, loquimur*", it is pressing words too far to insist that both author and recipient must have been within the pomerium at the time of writing. But it is not likely that an exile, banished from Rome by imperial decree, could use such a phrase without seeming to write incongruously.

But it is much more difficult to establish with certainty whether the work was written shortly before the exile, or after it. For the evidence which concerns Marcia, her family and acquaintances and their relative ages, is of its nature somewhat vague, and not entirely consistent. In the *Ad Marciam* itself we are told that Metilius died as a '*iuvenis*' of great promise (12.3 and 24.3) and that Livia and Octavia were great examples belonging to the same age and sex as Marcia (2.2). Now if the latter statement is accurate, given that Octavia died in 11 B.C., the latest possible date for Marcia's birth would be about 25 B.C.[4] But given also the tendency of Roman women to marry young (12 was the legally permitted age), it is difficult to see that the son of a woman of Marcia's age, who had held no magistracy, could be regarded as a young man of great promise in 49 A.D. or later. The external evidence, however, is not entirely consistent with this picture. Marcia's father, Cremutius Cordus committed suicide after being accused of lèse-majesté in 25 A.D. (Tac. *Ann.* 4, 34-5, Dio 57, 24, 2-4). Dio describes Cremutius as ἐν πύλαις ἤδη γήρως (on the threshold of old age) while the narratives of Tacitus, Seneca and Dio all suggest that Cremutius had not given up attending the senate, as those over sixty were permitted to do (Sen. *De Brev. Vit.* 3.5). This suggests that a birth-date for Marcia of 15 B.C. or even later is quite likely, making it at least possible for Metilius to have died '*iuvenis*' in the latter part of Seneca's exile.

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argue for a date for the *Ad Marciam* before Seneca's exile. However, A. Bourgery, *Sénèque Prosateur,* Paris, 1922, p. 47, has argued for 49 A.D. as the date of composition, while L. Hermann, La date de la "Consolation" à Marcia, *R.E.A.* 31, 1929, pp. 21-28 has even suggested A.D. 62.

[4] K. Abel, in *Gnomon* 30, 1958, p. 610, thinks that a date as early as 30 B.C. must be postulated, while Griffin, *loc. cit.*, is prepared to allow a date as late as 20 B.C.

The arguments used in the attempt to solve this problem have not all been strong. Buresch, for example, believed that Seneca's failure to refer to his own exile where exile is under discussion (e.g. at 17.5 and 22.3) is best explained by placing the work before his banishment. But, as Favez points out, four references to exile in a work where that is not the major subject might suggest that exile had influenced the author profoundly.[5] More weight however can be attached to Seneca's failure to mention Gaius. In the other prose works that emperor is one of Seneca's favourite butts, and in the *Ad Marciam* passages on the evils of the times (e.g. 22, 2-3) offered him a golden opportunity for an attack on Germanicus' depraved son. What better explanation of Gaius' absence than the fact that he was still ruler when the work was written.[6] Also significant is the part Cremutius Cordus plays in the work; Marcia is urged to think of her resolution at the time of his death (1, 2-4); he is cited as *exemplum* (22, 4-8) and is cited and given a prosopopeia at the conclusion of the work (25, 2 -end). The prominent part he plays is more intelligible the closer in time the *Ad Marciam* is to his death, or at least to the republication of his work. It is not likely that Seneca's use of Cremutius Cordus would have made such a strong impact if, as in Herrmann's view, he had been dead for 37 years and his writings had been republished for nearly 25. It can also be noted that Seneca's other extant *consolationes* date from Seneca's exile, and his ready use of the genre at that time is consistent with a previous interest in its use.

Against these arguments for a date of 40 B.C., both Bourgery and Herrmann[7] have argued that such a date squeezes too many events into the single year 37 A.D. For such a date to be possible, they argue, four events, the lifting of the ban on Cremutius' history, its republication, Metilius' sacerdotial appointment and his death must have all occurred in the first year of Gaius' principate, which though not impossible, is perhaps unlikely. However, one of these events, the granting of a priesthood to Metilius, can be removed from that year, even on the assumption of 40 as a publication date for the *Ad Marciam*. Metilius gained his priesthood while '*puer admodum*' (24.3) through Marcia's influence. In view of the emphasis Seneca places on Marcia's *amicitia* with Livia (4.2 "*quam familiariter coluisti*") Metilius may have been honoured through the influence of the dowager empress, most probably before the death of Cremutius Cordus in

[5] C. Buresch, *loc. cit.*; C. Favez, *loc. cit.*

[6] For these arguments Z. Stewart, Sejanus, Gaetulicus and Seneca, *A.J.P.* 74, 1953, pp. 70-85, and M. Griffin, *loc. cit.*

[7] A. Bourgery, *loc. cit.*; L. Herrmann, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

25 A.D., but not necessarily so, because, as Giancotti[8] rightly remarks, Metilius would have been regarded as his father's son rather than as a member of the family of his maternal grandfather, and it is equally true that the Roman aristocracy did not allow every relationship of the 20's and 30's A.D. to be influenced by Sejanus. It is likewise true that Metilius may have been very young when granted his priesthood. Favez[9] appositely points out that Julius Caesar was a candidate for appointment at the age of 13.

But while this enables us to set a wide interval between Metilius' priesthood and his death, it is inconclusive for the dating of the work. For Metilius cannot be assumed to be under 25 at the time of his death.[10] For while Metilius had achieved no magistracy, there is no conclusive evidence that he would have gained a quaestorship at the minimum age. He had never been military tribune (24.1) one of the normal qualifications for the quaestorship, and he was a shy young man to whose '*verecundia*' Seneca twice refers (19.6 and 24.2). Moreover there is no evidence of his grandfather or any other close relative holding office so distinguished that automatic election at the minimum age was assured. Seneca himself was well into his thirties when elected quaestor. Thus a boy in his teens given a priesthood before the death of Livia in 29 could certainly have died '*iuvenis*' and without a magistracy in 37, but it is also just possible for the same to be true in 45, and the three year interval between Metilius' death and Seneca's *consolatio* to be the result of Seneca's exile. Although I think 40 A.D. is the most likely date for the *Ad Marciam*, Giancotti's statement that the work was written any time after the beginning of 40 A.D. is perhaps the safest conclusion.[11]

The second question to which we must address ourselves is, 'why was the *Ad Marciam* written?'' The obvious answer is, of course, to console Marcia, but that cannot be taken for granted, as few would maintain that the *Ad Polybium* "was designed solely to cheer up Polybius."[12] It is clear from the flattery of both Polybius and Claudius that Seneca was hoping that Claudius' '*a libellis*' and later '*a studiis*' would use his influence with the emperor to have him recalled from exile (*Ad Polyb.* 12, 3 - 14, 1; 18, 9). In 1953 Z. Stewart[13] argued that there was a similar political motivation

[8] F. Giancotti, *Cronologia dei Dialoghi di Seneca*, Turin 1957, p. 56.

[9] C. Favez, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

[10] With M. Griffin, *loc. cit.*,

[11] F. Giancotti, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-73, as opposed to the more definite dating of Abel in *Bauformen... loc. cit.*, followed by M. Griffin, *loc. cit.*

[12] A point appositely made by M. Griffin, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

[13] Z. Stewart, *op. cit.*

behind the *Ad Marciam*. The family of Seneca had close political relationships with Sejanus. His aunt's husband C. Galerius was prefect of Egypt from 16-31 A.D., and his recall from the province coincided with the fall of Sejanus. An anecdote in one of the letters (*Ep. Mor.* 122, 11) shows that he moved in the same social circles as Pinarius Natta, the accuser of Sejanus' victim Cremutius Cordus. Seneca's friend Lucilius was also a close friend of Gaetulicus whose daughter had been engaged to Sejanus' eldest son. Stewart proceeded to argue that in around 39 a sudden change in Gaius' policy brought former connections of Sejanus into danger. Calvisius Sabinus, Gaetulicus' consular colleague in 26, who had faced charges after Sejanus' fall, was recalled from Pannonia. He and his wife committed suicide. Gaetulicus was executed after a conspiracy had been discovered, and around the same time Lucilius faced torture because of his connection with Gaetulicus.[14] An anecdote in Dio, probably apocryphal, suggests that Seneca was himself in danger under Gaius, even if we dismiss the detail which suggests that he was saved only by the services of a prostitute who told the emperor he was dying.[15] In a work which many scholars would assign to 40 A.D., Seneca addresses the daughter of one of Sejanus' victims and assails the prefect more violently than in any of his other extant writings. Should we therefore regard the *Ad Marciam* as an attempt by Seneca to secure his own safety by dissociating himself from a faction of former Seianiani?

Yet the prosopographical evidence does not allow us to maintain that there was a continuing group of Sejanus' followers who remained under Tiberius' suspicion and isolated from their fellow aristocrats. Gaetulicus, for example, remained *legatus* in Upper Germany throughout the period. His father was appointed *praefectus urbi* in 33. Galerius' successor as prefect of Egypt, Avillius Flaccus had given evidence against Agrippina in 29 A.D., along with clients of Sejanus. The internal evidence also fails to support Stewart's view. If the *Ad Marciam* was a politically motivated exercise in opportunism we should expect to find Gaius and his close associates flattered as Claudius and his freedmen are in the *Ad Polybium*. Such flattery cannot be found. Moreover we should remember that there is no certain evidence of dating, and, except in 40 A.D., the work could serve no political purpose.[16]

[14] Suet., *Gaius* 24; Dio Cassius 59, 13, 2 and *ibid.* 16, 1-8 and 22, 6-9; Sen. *N.Q.* 4A, *praef*, 15.

[15] Dio Cassius 59, 19, 7.

[16] Tacitus, *Ann.* 6, 10, 6; Philo, *Flacc* 9, 11; P.I.R.² C1380; M. Griffin, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-3, pp. 45-57.

There is much more evidence to suggest that we have here a genuine *consolatio,* as will be seen from an analysis of its structure and contents. Certainly, it was Marcia's particular cause of grief to which Seneca addresses himself, and her situation which dominates the whole work.[17] The background to Marcia's grief is outlined in the first chapter, and she is encouraged to pull herself together by recalling her own previous behaviour. The first *exempla,* Livia and Octavia were chosen with her in mind as "*et sexus et saeculi tui exempla*" (2.2) while Livia had been her particular friend (4.2). Likewise after a second set of *exempla* have dealt with male fortitude, Marcia's possible objection that a woman is more prone to grief is countered both by argument and by examples of female resolution (16, 1-4). Marcia is expressly told that the *consolatio* put into the mouth of Areius Didymus is appropriate to her situation (6.1), and is later urged to find comfort in her own family situation, surrounded by her daughters and grandchildren (16, 6-9). Although the *laus mortui* was a traditional feature of the consolation, it is noteworthy that Metilius' virtues are referred to more than once (12, 3; 23, 3; 24, 1-4). It is likewise significant that the sufferings of Marcia's father are given a lengthy treatment in the final main section of the work (22, 4-8) and the work concludes with a *prosopopeia* of him in which he is pictured addressing his daughter from the heavenly heights where, he says, her son is. The closing line of the work begins '*Felicem filium tuum*' (26, 7).

However Seneca must also have had in mind a wider audience than Marcia. This would explain why he would address her in a published work rather than in a strictly private letter of condolence. Seneca was undoubtedly aware that some of his arguments, drawn from a long-established literary tradition,[18] would prove useful and relevant to other bereaved parents. In the *Ad Marciam* we find a number of digressions upon the human situation, dealing with the greater impact of the unexpected (9.1ff), the mutability of fortune (9, 1-11), the inseparability of life's pains from its pleasures (17-18), and the evils from which death can rescue a man (20). The occasional use of the masculine participles in such sections, even though his addressee is feminine (9, 3; 17, 1 and 18, 4), and a plural imperative (10, 4)[19] strongly suggest that there are times when this wider

[17] For the structure, see *infra,* and for Marcia's position in the work, K. Abel, *op. cit.,* p. 19.

[18] See *infra,* the Literary and Philosophic Background of the *Ad Marciam* and the commentary passim.

[19] On these linguistic usages see *inter alia,* C. Favez, *op. cit.,* p. LVII, p. 22; K. Abel, *op. cit.,* p. 22.

audience is uppermost in the author's mind. In this respect the *Ad Marciam* follows the pattern of other dialogi which in discussing the particular problem of an individual open up questions of a wider and more general significance.[20]

[20] One may compare the *De Brevitate Vitae* where the question of Paulinus' retirement opens up a discussion on the relative claims of the life of politics and administration and of the life of philosophic retreat, or the *De Tranquillitate Animi* where Serenus' mental condition becomes the starting point for a general treatise on how *tranquillitas* may be obtained.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE AD MARCIAM

Seneca has left us three clues concerning the rhetorical structure of the *Ad Marciam*. After an exordium *ab auditore* and *a re*, Seneca announces (2.1) a preliminary division of the subject matter "*Scio a praeceptis incipere omnis qui monere aliquem volunt, in exemplis desinere. Mutari hunc interim morem expedit.*" Marcia is to expect an unconventional ordering of material in that *exempla* will precede *praecepta*. At 12.1 Seneca introduces a further division of material when he asks Marcia "*Dolor tuus...utrum sua spectat incommoda an eius qui decessit.*" He proceeds to examine Marcia's situation, using *exempla* and a lengthy discussion of life's advantages and disadvantages to support his arguments, until at 19.3 he brings this part to an end and with an imagined interjection on the part of Marcia "*non movent me detrimenta mea; etenim non est dignus solacio qui filium sibi decessisse sicut mancipium moleste fert, cui quicquam in filio praeter ipsum vacat...*" thereby indicating that he will pass to the second part of the subject matter suggested at 12.1.

Using this basic evidence, a number of scholars[1] have during the course of this century analysed the rhetorical structure of the work, with the result that there is now a broad consensus about the main divisions of the work. Between the *exordium* and the *peroratio*, which is signified by the prosopopoeia of Cremutius Cordus at 26.1 "*Puta...patrem tuum...dicere*" are four main sections: exempla, general precepts, precepts relating to Marcia's situation, and precepts relating to Metilius' situation. There has been some difference of opinion concerning where the *exempla* end and the general *praecepta* begin. Albertini was clearly mistaken in regarding the consolation put into the mouth of Areus as part of the general *praecepta*. His arguments to Livia are a development of the example of Livia as a person suitable to imitate. However, the Stoic commonplace that tears cannot vanquish fate is more difficult to assign with certainty. Favez and Grollios regard this chapter as part of the general *praecepta,* which the Stoic character of the argument could justify, but Reid is probably right in regarding this as a link between the *exempla* and *praecepta.* We can thus construct an overall plan of the work as follows:

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[1] E. Albertini, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-4; C. Favez. *op. cit.*, pp. LXV-LXXI; C. C. Grollios, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-18; K. Abel, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-46; D. N. G. Reid, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-16. In this section I am indebted to the analyses of all these writers, but follow none of them exactly. Where the work of these writers on the structure is referred to in the text of this section, it may be assumed that it is at the place cited above.

1.	ch.1	Exordium *ab auditore* and *a re*
2.	chs.2-5	Exempla
3.	ch.6	Link Section
4.	chs.7-11	General Praecepta
5.	chs.12-19.2	Praecepta relating to Marcia's situation
6.	ch.19.3	Link Section
7.	chs.19.4-25	Praecepta relating to Metilius' situation
8.	ch.26	Peroratio

An analysis of these individual sections will be found at the appropriate place in the commentary.

K. Abel has shown that one must understand the *Ad Marciam* not only in terms of its rhetorical structure, but in terms of its psychological structure, the pattern of picture and argument by which Marcia is induced to give up her grief and to regard her son's death not as a cause for sorrow, but as something to be accepted gladly. This psychological structure is related to and sometimes corresponds to the rhetorical structure, but at other times overlaps so that a similar theme is found in a number of parts of the work.

We may notice the following instances where the rhetorical and psychological structure correspond. The exordium may be analysed not only as 1.1-4 *ab auditore,* and 1.5-8 *a re,* but as 1.1-4, Marcia coping courageously with the death of her father and 1.5-8, Marcia broken by the death of her son. This picture of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour is then reinforced by the picture of Octavia never giving up her grief and Livia courageously laying aside her grief with the burial of her son (2-5).

Abel then analyses the *praecepta* and suggests that the general *praecepta* (7-11) aim at a radical inner change of attitude, that is that Marcia should see that her loss is not particularly abnormal or unexpected and that excessive grief is an inappropriate reaction, while the *praecepta* which follow deal with the specific situation of Marcia and Metilius and aims to show that nothing in the situation of either is an adequate cause of grief. This corresponds broadly to the two possible ways of removing emotional disturbances outlined by Cicero in his *Tusculan Disputations,* the attack on emotional disturbance in general, and the attack on the particular cause of distress.[2] There is a further correspondence between the rhetorical and psychological structure. The aim of the general *praecepta* is to persuade Marcia to moderate her grief. Seneca replies to her interjection "*At enim*

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[2] Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* IV, 59. "*Est etiam in omnibus quattuor perturbationibus illa distinctio...utrum illudne non videatur aegre ferundum ex quo suscepta sit aegritudo, an omnium rerum tollenda omnino aegritudo, ut si quis aegre ferat se pauperem esse, idne disputes, paupertatem malum non esse an hominem aegre ferre nihil oportere.*"

naturale desiderium suorum est" with the rhetorical question "*Quis negat, quandiu modicum est?*" (7.1) The *exemplum* which precedes and supports the arguments, that of Livia, is described as "*exemplum...moderatius mitius.*" But peripatetic moderation of the emotions is not Seneca's final goal for Marcia, but a step on the way to the Stoic ideal of *apatheia*, a necessary step for one who has been grieving with such vehemence for so long. By the time Marcia has listened to the *praecepta* relating to the particular situation, Seneca hopes to convince her that death is "*optimum inventum naturae*" (20.1), and that she should not only accept her son's death but rejoice in the bliss he now enjoys "*erubesce...mutatos in melius tuos flere*" (25.3). The *praecepta* which advocate this attitude are supported at a very early stage by *exempla* (12.6-16.4). The historical characters treated here all displayed little or no emotion, and Aemilius Paulus even thanked the Gods that he was able to pay for Rome's unprecedented good fortune by private losses (13.3-4). In other words we have a dual division of the work in which first moderation of emotion is supported by first *exempla* and then *praecepta*, following which first *exempla* and then *praecepta* are used to advocate *apatheia*.

However, there are certain types of persuasion which are not limited to any particular section of the rhetorical structure. An important facet of Marcia's character is revealed at 2.1, when Seneca declares his intention to proceed with *exempla* before *praecepta*. He explains "*quosdam ratio ducit, quibusdam nomina clara opponenda sunt et auctoritas quae liberum non relinquat animum ad speciosa stupenti.*" In other words Marcia is more likely to be influenced by authority and example than by reason. Thus Marcia both at the beginning and the end of the work is urged to consider herself under the eye of two people who had exercised great influence upon her in the past and would have been likely to disapprove of her present behaviour. At 4.2 the Empress Livia is portrayed as summoning Marcia to follow her own example "*illa te ad suum consilium vocat*", while at 26.1 it is Cremutius Cordus whom Marcia is urged to hear exhorting her to regard her son's lot as blessed.

What the examples and pictures all encourage is *magnitudo animi*, which runs as a linking thread through the work. At 1.5 Seneca refers to this as a quality of Marcia herself, displayed in the years following her father's suicide, and such a quality is attributed to Aemilius Paulus (13.4), Cornelia (16.4) and Cremutius Cordus (26.3). Now those who possessed such a quality did not place great importance upon externals, not even upon life and death, "*Nec umquam magnis ingeniis cara in corpore mora est*" (23.2). Thus the power of fortune over external goods and over bodily life which is

emphasised earlier (9-11) is shown to be ultimately unimportant. For however severe and however irremediable the misfortunes it brings, death always offers a possible way of escape to liberty "*licet uno gradu ad libertatem transire*" (20.3).

Along with *magnitudo animi, libertas* is what Abel describes as a Leitbegriff of the work, running through all its parts. This concept was especially useful to Seneca because of the breadth of meaning of the word in the first century.[3] As a quality of Cremutius Cordus (1.3 and 22.4), *libertas* means something like outspoken frankness, the refusal to submit to the will of a tyrant, a quality which commanded Marcia's respect. Philosophically it represented in Stoic terms the refusal to allow external circumstances to bow down the soul of the wise man and compel him to regard his circumstances as evil (20.3), while in Platonic terms it represented the freedom of the soul to arrive at complete understanding when freed from the restrictions of the corporeal, (23.1 "*liberati, leviores ad originem suam revolant*" [animi], and notes to ch. 23). For Seneca, the work of bringing Marcia to accept Metilius' death without resentment, involved showing her the *libertas* which it was her ancestral inheritance to honour, and then unfolding to her other aspects of it, namely the *libertas* which she herself could attain by refusing to be overwhelmed by her son's death, and the *libertas* which her father and her son had already attained by the liberation from bodily ties accomplished at death. Thus the carefully planned rhetorical structure is underpinned by the psychological development of the themes of *magnitudo animi* and *libertas* which recur throughout the consolation.

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[3] Ch. Wirszubski, *Libertas as a political ideal at Rome,* Cambridge, 1950, fully discusses the various political meanings of *Libertas,* pp. 97-171.

THE LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHIC BACKGROUND OF THE AD MARCIAM

The development of the *consolatio* or παραμυθητικὸς λόγος as a specific genre of ancient writing occurred late in the history of ancient literature. Roman practitioners of the genre looked back to Crantor the third century Academician as its first practitioner and attributed great weight to his περὶ πένθους πρὸς ἱπποκλέα.[1] It was a natural literary development of the hellenistic age when the prime concern of philosophy was to equip the individual to meet the changes and chances of life, when in C. F. Angus' famous phrase philosophy became "no longer the pillar of the fire going before a few intrepid seekers after truth...rather an ambulance following in the wake of the struggle for existence picking up the weak and the wounded."[2] It was a literary counterpart to the activity of such Cynic preachers as Crates who went about with his wife Hipparchia, wearing the rough cynic cloak and approaching individuals with advice.[3]

As a literary genre, despite its Academic origins and probable association with cynicism, *consolatio* soon became part of the armoury of all hellenistic schools. In his *Tusculan Disputations*, Cicero outlines consolatory arguments by Cleanthes and Chrysippus, Epicurus, the Peripatetics and the Cyrenaics.[4] The specific situations to which consolers addressed themselves were many and varied. Cicero names arguments "*de paupertate...de vita inhonorata et ingloria...de exsilio, de interitu patriae, de servitute, de debilitate, de caecitate, de omni casu in quo nomen poni solet calamitatis.*"[5] The majority of surviving *consolationes* deal with bereavement but Seneca's *Ad Helviam* deals with exile, while Juvenal's thirteenth Satire is a mock *consolatio* addressed to a man who has been defrauded.[6]

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[1] D.L. IV, 27 θαυμάζεται δὲ αὐτοῦ βιβλίον μάλιστα τὸ Περὶ πένθους. Cic., *Acad.* II, 44, 135 *Legimus omnes Crantoris, veteris Academici, de luctu; est enim non magnus, verum aureolus et ut Tuberoni Panaetius praecipit ad verbum ediscendus libellus.*

[2] In *C.A.H.* vol. 7, p. 231.

[3] D.L. VI, 93.

[4] Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* III, 31, 76.

[5] *Ibid.* III, 34, 81.

[6] The subject of bereavement is dealt with in the following extant prose *consolationes* Cicero, *Ad Fam.* IV, 5; V, 16; VI, 3; *Ad Att.* XII, 10; *Ad M. Brut.* I, 9; Seneca, *Ad Marciam*; *Ad Polybium*; *Ep. Mor.* 63; 93; 99; Plutarch, *Ad Apollonium*; *Ad uxorem*; Ambrose, *de excessu fratris sui Satyri*; *De obitu Valentiniani*; *de obitu Theodosii*; Jerome, *Epist.* 39; 60; 66; 75. Cicero handles much consolatory material in his *Tusculan Disputations* I and III. The poetic consolationes, the anonymous *Consolatio Ad Liviam*, and the consolatory *Silvae* of Statius (II, 1; II, 6;

To describe the genre 'consolatio' as the product of the Hellenistic age is not to argue that all the arguments used by consolers originated in that period. From the beginning of time one friend must have consoled another in the face of misfortune, and in as much as literature reflects life, some of the things said on such occasions found their way into the works of poets and playwrights. We may think of the lines spoken to Admetus by the chorus in the *Alcestis,* reminding him that he is neither the first nor last to lose a noble wife.[7] Before the Hellenistic age philosophers also had dis cussed such questions as the nature of the soul and its fate after death, or whether the morally good was to be chosen even if attended by grave inconvenience. These arguments of a literary or earlier philosophic origin abound in consolatory writings. It is perhaps no accident that Crantor admired Homer and Euripides above all other poets, judging by the frequency with which we find citations from these authors in consolatory literature.[8] Likewise the arguments about death which Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates[9] at his trial became standard for consolatores. Certainly citations are often out of context, and R. Kassel has rightly pointed out that the spirit of consolatory literature was entirely different to that of the Platonic Socrates,[10] but the desire of the consolers to find the most venerable authorities for their arguments is noteworthy. In this respect Seneca shows considerable restraint; a citation from Publilius Syrus, another from the *Aeneid* and an obvious allusion to that work are the limits of the backing sought in the *Ad Marciam* from the 'classics' of Seneca's own day.[11]

III, 3; V, 1 and V, 5) while sharing some features of the philosophic consolatio, conform to somewhat different generic norms (see my article, Grief in Statius' *Epicedia* in *A.U.M.L.A.* 50, 1978, pp. 251-60).

[7] Euripides, *Alcestis* 416-419.

[8] D.L. IV, 26; *Tusc. Disp.* III contains three translations of Euripides, three of Homer, and one each from Aeschylus and Sophocles. If anything Plutarch's propensity to quote from these authors is even greater. The *Consolatio Ad Apollonium* has nineteen citations of separate passages of Homer, and ten from Euripides.

[9] Plato, *Apology* 40D.ff; for details of its recurrence in consolatory context see the commentary p. 108.

[10] R. Kassel, Untersuchungen zur Griechischen und Römischen Konsolationslitteratur, *Zetemata* 18, Munich 1958, pp. 33-4 contrasts Socrates' professed desire to examine whatever questions are raised (Plato, *Phaedo* 84d-85c) with the desire of Cicero to be convinced of the doctrine of immortality (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 40 "*ego enim ipse cum eodem isto* [sc. Platone] *non invitus erraverim*).

[11] Publilius Syrus at 9.5; Virgil *Aeneid* X, 472 at 21, 5, and an allusion to *Aeneid* IX, 642 at 15.1 The *Ad Polybium* contains only one citation, from Ennius *Telamon,* also found in Cicero *Tusc. Disp.* III, 13, 28.

The various arguments of the hellenistic schools have been fully outlined by Grollios and Kassel,[12] so that the briefest resumé will suffice here. We have referred previously to Cicero's division of the types of approach, the attack on emotional disturbance in general, and the attack on the particular cause of distress.[13] Amongst approaches of the former type we may categorise the approach of the Cyrenaics who believed that the extent of the disturbance resulted from failure to recognise the possibility that its cause could occur, or of the Epicureans who believed that excessive concentration on present misfortunes prevented the giving of adequate weight to present, past and future goods. The latter class of approaches includes that of Cleanthes who urged that there was no evil in what had occurred, or of the Peripatetics, that the evil was not great, and probably that of Chrysippus that it is important to remove from the distressed person's mind the opinion that he is behaving as duty prescribes.[14] In practice however, would-be consolers soon added the arguments of others to those of their own school. Chrysippus accepted and adopted the Cyrenaic argument that unanticipated misfortune struck harder,[15] while Panaetius, himself a Stoic, was prepared to recommend to Tubero the consolatory treatise of the Academic Crantor in which the doctrine of moderation of the emotions was almost certainly urged.[16] By the first century B.C. works had been written in which all the arguments of the philosophers were brought together, in the hope that at least one whould prove effective, and Cicero followed this pattern in his own *consolatio.*[17] Seneca is therefore following a well established generic tradition in using arguments of both types, and from a number of philosophic schools.

Other features of the *Consolatio ad Marciam* can be explained by the developments that had taken place in philosophic writing at Rome in the eighty years or more that separated Cicero's philosophic works from Seneca's first productions. Cicero's purpose in writing on philosophic topics had been educational in the broadest sense. For him it was far more important that the views of all the schools be faithfully expounded, for the reader to consider the arguments and make his own decisions, than to

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[12] Grollios, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-54; Kassel, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-39.

[13] Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* IV, 26, 59, quoted above p. xii.

[14] For these arguments, Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* III, 31, 76. For a fuller discussion of individual consolatory arguments with references, see infra, for the Epicureans p. 47-8, for the Peripatetics p. 53, for Chrysippus p. 54, and for the Cyrenaics p. 60-1.

[15] Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* III, 22, 52.

[16] Cic. *Acad.* II, 44, 135.

[17] Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* III, 31, 76 "*sunt...qui haec omnia genera consolandi colligant—alius enim alio modo movetur—ut fere nos in Consolatione omnia in consolationem unam coniecimus.*"

pressurise people into adopting his own view.[18] Thus the style of the works was that of the quiet, dispassionate search for truth, and if it was permissible in exposition to use an orator's technique to delight the reader, it was not necessary to use those tricks of political and forensic oratory that made a case sound better than it really was.[19] But Cicero does not seem to have been typical. In the introduction to his *Tusculan Disputations*[20] he complains of the many books written by individuals who though morally worthy, were incapable of committing their thoughts to paper lucidly. These certainly included Epicureans,[21] but probably also Stoics,[22] and if the Stoic preachers described in Horace's *Satires* are accurately portrayed, it is reasonable to assume that they adopted some of the characteristics and the doctrines of the popular Cynic preacher.[23] It was this type of philosophy which aimed at the moral improvement of the recipient which was to exercise the most potent influence in the Augustan period and the years immediately following.

Augustus had been prepared to argue that the chaos of the last years of the republic had been caused by the failure of the Romans to live up to the high moral standards of their ancestors: what was needed was a thoroughgoing programme of moral reform.[24] He was to find that his call was readily echoed by men of letters. The Roman *Odes* of Horace, and the history of Livy glorifying the life-style of the men of the remote past were part of this move to propagate higher standards of behaviour, while in philosophy the counterpart of this movement in poetry and history was

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[18] Cic. *De Nat. De.* I, 5, 10 "*Qui autem requirunt quid quaque de re ipsi sentiamus, curiosius id faciunt quam necesse est; non enim tam auctoritatis in disputando quam rationis momenta quaerenda sunt.*"

[19] Cic. *Or.* 62-4 "*tamen horum* [sc. philosophorum] *oratio neque nervos neque aculeos oratorios ac forenses habet: loquuntur cum doctis quorum sedare animos malunt quam incitare de rebus placatis ac minime turbulentis docendi causa, non capiendi...mollis est enim oratio philosophorum et umbratilis, ...nihil iratum habet, nihil invidum, nihil atrox, nihil miserabile, nihil astutum.*" *De Off.* 1.1, 3 "*hoc quoque colendum est aequabile et temperatum orationis genus...hoc quietum disputandi genus.*"

[20] Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* I, 3, 6 "*...quod multi iam esse libri Latini dicuntur scripti inconsiderate ab optimis illis quidem viris sed non satis eruditis. Fieri autem potest ut recte quis sentiat et id, quod sentiat, polite eloqui non possit.*"

[21] As for example the works of Amafinius and Rabirius criticised through the mouth of Varro at *Acad.* 1, 2, 5; see also A. D. Leeman, *Orationis Ratio,* Amsterdam, 1964, pp. 200ff. who rightly emphasises Cicero's aversion to contemporary Epicureans.

[22] It is unlikely that Cicero would have conceded "*recte quis sentiat*" to an Epicurean, and a letter of Cassius, (in Cic. *Ad Fam.* XV, 19, 1) mentions "*tot rusticos Stoicos.*"

[23] E.g. the doctrines of Stertinius outlined in Hor. *Sat.* II, 3 and Crispinus, *ibid.* II, 7, on which see Oltramare, *Les origines de la diatribe Romaine,* Lausanne 1926, pp. 126-137.

[24] On this see R. Syme, *Roman Revolution,* Oxford, 1939, pp. 440-475; we may mention in passing Augustus' reform of the marriage laws, sumptuary legislation and rebuilding of the temples (Suet., *Div. Aug.* 34; Augustus, *Res Gestae* 20e).

the movement of the Sextii, who profoundly influenced the rhetoricians of the Augustan age, including Seneca's father, the rhetor, and his teacher, Fabianus.[25]

No writings of the Sextii, either father or son survive, though we do know something of their teachings from the extant works of Plutarch, the Elder and Younger Seneca, and from their acknowledged disciple Fabianus whom the two Senecae quote at some length. The aim of Sextian teaching was to produce moral reform. Sextius' custom, which presumably he commended to others, was to examine his conscience nightly and ask himself "what evil of yours have you healed today? what vice have you resisted? in what part are you better?"[26] Fabianus was severely critical of those types of literary and historical studies which produced no improvement in character.[27] Oltramare has shown that many of the specific doctrines of the Sextii are also found in Cynic diatribe,[28] but while the Sextii rejected the subtleties of Stoic logic,[29] Seneca saw in their ascetic practices something akin to Stoic teaching.[30] This asceticism was accompanied by outspoken criticism of contemporary habits, in particular the luxury fashionable in certain quarters of the Roman aristocracy in matters of food, dress and housing.[31] There are also strong grounds for supposing that the Sextii made widespread use of exemplary citation in their philosophic discourse. Examples from Roman history had been used by Cicero in his *Paradoxa Stoicorum* and *Tusculan Disputations*,[32] but had become far more frequent in the writings of Seneca and Plutarch. Oltramare has shown parallels in the treatment of exemplary historical characters in these latter two writers. Now Plutarch began to learn Latin late in life, and never mastered it thoroughly. His two treatises περὶ σαρχοφαγίας show an acquaintance with Sextian teaching, and what could be more likely than that his source for the examples he treats was one who wrote in the Greek language, but in Roman fashion.[33] In addition to this

[25] On Fabianus' adoption of the teaching of Sextius, Seneca Rhetor, *Contr.* II *praef* 4 "*cum* [Fabianus] *Sextium audiret.*"

[26] Seneca, *De Ira* III, 36.

[27] Seneca, *De Brev. Vit.* 13, 9.

[28] Oltramare, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-65.

[29] For Sextian attitudes to '*cavillatio*', see Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 64, 3, and *De Brev. Vit.* 10, 1 (Fabianus) and Oltramare, *loc. cit.*

[30] *Ep. Mor.* 64, 2. "*Q. Sextii patris magni, si quid mihi credis, viri et, licet neget, Stoici.*"

[31] For a discourse of Fabianus attacking all these three forms of excess, Sen. *Contr.* II, 1, 11.

[32] Cic. *Parad. Stoic.* 2, 16 (Regulus); 5, 38 (M. Curius) and 6, 48 (M. Curius and Fabricius). In *Tusc. Disp.* I, Cicero uses the much more contemporary examples of Cato (1.74), Pompey (1.86) and himself (1.84).

[33] Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 59, 7 "*Sextium, virum acrem, Graecis verbis, Romanis moribus philosophantem.*"

evidence we have the statement of Fabianus that examples provided him with all the instruction he needed "*Nihil est mihi opus praecipientibus, habeo exemplum.*"[34]

The influence of the Sextii was profound, and, through Fabianus, their teaching and their methods made an impact upon the next generation of rhetoricians. In fact the new political situation, in which oratorical gifts could no longer be used to influence masses of people, nor to persuade jurors to a particular course in important political trials, but where political influence behind closed doors carried more weight, may well have made these moralising themes attractive to the rhetors in any case. Thus we find Seneca's father, Albucius Silus, Musa and a host of others showing in their writings the influence of Fabianus and of Sextian philosophy.[35] It was this generation of rhetoricians who were the teachers and the exemplars of the young Seneca, and two particular aspects of Sextian influence are revealed in the *Ad Marciam.* Quintilian was later to describe Seneca as "*egregius tamen vitiorum insectator*",[36] and the criticism of contemporary society so vigorously undertaken in chapter 22 of the work may well reflect the general influence of the Sextian movement. Likewise the lengthy passages of exemplary citation which account for something like a quarter of the total work may point in the same direction, though to be sure, it was not just the philosophers and rhetoricians but also the leading historian of the Augustan age who held that history could teach moral lessons.[37] Finally we may suggest that consolatory writing itself—and Seneca left three published *consolationes*—reflects a desire to change the mode of behaviour individuals have adopted and is in harmony with the new direction the Sextian movement gave to philosophic activity.

Seneca himself became deeply interested in philosophy in his adolescence, and both Fabianus and Sotion had had a considerable impact upon him as early as the opening years of Tiberius' reign. It was under the influence of the Pythagorean Sotion that Seneca was persuaded to abstain from meat for a whole year until Tiberius' expulsion of foreign cults in A.D. 19 made it politically dangerous to follow such a regime and Seneca allowed his father to persuade him to a more normal diet.[38] But by the

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[34] Sen. *Contr.* II, 6, 2; and on the use of exempla by the Sextii, Oltramare, *op. cit.*, pp. 178ff.

[35] Oltramare, *op. cit.*, pp. 185-9.

[36] Quintilian, *Inst. Or.* X, 1. 129.

[37] Livy, *praef.* 10, *Hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque reipublicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod vites.*

[38] *Ep. Mor.* 108, 22.

time he began to write, it was the Stoic school who claimed his allegiance. While he was always eager to recognise the merits of others' teachings, including that of the Epicureans, it was the Stoics whom he always referred to as '*nostri*',[39] and while willing to criticise the more abstruse conclusions of Stoic logic or physics.[40] his fundamental adhesion to the Stoic system is not in doubt.[41] A full exposition of Stoic philosophy cannot be undertaken at this point, but a brief consideration[42] will help us to understand why consolatio was an appropriate genre for a writer of Stoic convictions. For the Stoic the most significant fact about the world-process is that it was governed by the providence of a beneficent divinity. This divine πνεῦμα or *spiritus* infused all the individual parts of the world including man, giving the individual object its own unity. The regularity of the world process, the unchanging pattern of effect following upon cause suggested that this governing divinity was rational and intelligent, in fact the rational par excellence.[43] Thus the rational element in man became identified as "God within him", that fragment of divine substance which made him what he was.[44] For man therefore, the goal of life was to understand the cosmic processes, to bring the individual reason into conformity with cosmic reason, and to co-operate with it. Since this development of right reason was the sole good for man, the sole evil was the wrong disposition of the will, including the actions which both led to its corruption and were themselves proof of its imperfection.[45] The things which men commonly pursue as goods and shun as evils were technically indifferent (ἀδιάφορα) to a Stoic since they had no necessary relationship to the right disposition of the will, even though the rational man would, if choice were given, regard such things as health, wealth, political success and the like as preferable (προηγμένα) and their opposites as things to be avoided (ἀποπροηγμένα).[46] Given this view of the universe and of the human situation, the treatment of grief (*aegritudo* or λύπη) was important for two reasons. Firstly grief was

[39] Examples *inter alia* include *Beat. Vit.* 3.2 and *Ep. Mor.* 65, 2; 116, 1.

[40] E.g. *Ep. Mor.* 57, 7-8 where Seneca ridicules and rebuts the view of some Stoics that if a man is crushed by a heavy weight, his soul cannot escape whole and therefore survive. His claims to freedom of thought at *Beat. Vit.* 3.2 are however on close examination somewhat limited.

[41] This point is well made by M. P. Grimal, *Sénèque,* Paris, 1966, pp. 42-3.

[42] The following description of Stoic views is neither new nor controversial. If it contains unconscious reminiscences of other authorities, I apologise for lack of acknowledgement.

[43] Von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (= *S.V.F.*), vol. I, 172; II, 1106-1110.

[44] *S.V.F.* II, 776; Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 66, 12 "*Ratio autem nihil aliud est quam in corpus humanum pars divini spiritus mersa.*"

[45] *S.V.F.* III, 5-9, 29-31, 35.

[46] *S.V.F.* III, 117, 129-131.

irrational and unprofitable in a world where all was ordered by divine providence for the best. What has happened cannot be changed, and no doubt if God could have done things better, he would.[47] Secondly many of the circumstances which were in fact the occasion of grief were not real evils, but merely disadvantages (ἀποπροηγμένα) and were not sufficient to cause the reaction *aegritudo* or λύπη.[48] This applied even in the case of Marcia's bereavement, for neither life nor death were in themselves good or evil, and whatever external circumstances were, the wise man's good, as Stilbo had said,[49] remained within him, in the disposition of his will. For the Stoic therefore the work of *consolatio,* that is of bringing the individual will into harmony with the cosmic will, and in winning its acquiescence to what had been ordained, was educational and therapeutic work of prime importance.

To write a *consolatio* therefore is a thoroughly proper work for a convinced Stoic such as Seneca. Likewise his willingness to adopt the now well-established generic convention of including arguments from all schools is easily intelligible. Thoroughly Stoic as he was, his adhesion to the creed was never so sectarian that he refused to see that other philosophies had perceived part of the truth.[50] Moreover, influenced by the climate of opinion which had produced the Sextii, Seneca's great concern was to teach and to produce moral improvement.[51] He was well aware that arguments which might not be absolutely true could still be useful in producing improved attitudes, and both his rhetorical training—he was after all his father's son—and his aim in writing makes it likely that, in deciding whether to use an argument, Seneca's ultimate criterion would be its effectiveness.

It is unlikely that Seneca would have claimed any originality for the arguments used in the *Ad Marciam.* But this does not mean that the work is not worth reading, nor that it is valuable only for the exposition of the doctrines of others found elsewhere only fragmentarily. For there was a further description of his work which Seneca used, that of a spiritual physician. And even if a doctor dealing with eye diseases did not make any new

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[47] *S.V.F.* II, 1150 "*quod si aliter melius esset dispensari res mundi, eo modo sumpsisset compositionem, quatenus nihil occurret ad impediendum deum.*"

[48] *S.V.F.* III, 380-1, 393.

[49] Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 9, 18.

[50] In particular his appreciation of the qualities of the Epicureans was noteworthy (see *Beat. Vit.* 13, 1-3).

[51] *Ep. Mor.* 6, 4. "*nec me ulla res delectabit, licet sit eximia et salutaris, quam mihi uni sciturus sum.*"

discoveries, but successfully diagnosed particular conditions and applied the appropriate remedy from among those already discovered, he would be doing useful work. In the same way the physician of the soul may play his part by selecting the appropriate treatment from those discovered and outlined by his predecessors.[52] In the *Ad Marciam,* we see Seneca doing just this, and as we follow him in his successive use of example and precept, drawn often from well-established sources, it becomes obvious that as a healer of spiritual disorders Seneca was a master of his craft.

[52] *Ep. Mor.* 64, 8.

THE LANGUAGE AND STYLE OF THE AD MARCIAM

The language and style of a particular author are influenced by a number of factors, including: the resources of linguistic structures available to an author; his aims in writing; his personal tastes; the tastes of the age in which he is writing, and the people for whom he writes. It is the combination of all these factors which helped to produce the style of L. Annaeus Seneca, and make it something unique in Latin literature.

The syntactical innovations of the Late Republic and the Augustan period had borne fruit in opening a variety of new structures to later writers. For example Cicero in his philosophic works and letters had used *ne* plus the perfect subjunctive to express prohibitions,[1] a structure found in Old Latin, but avoided by Caesar and used only once by Cicero himself in his speeches. Seneca twice uses the construction in the *Ad Marciam,* 5.4 *ne...concupieris* and 5.6 *ne summiseris te.* Likewise Sallust's ready use of a gnomic perfect,[2] found in Plautus, but then largely eschewed, is taken up by Seneca for the expression of general statements (*Ad Marc.* 7.3 *quae a natura vim acceperunt eandem in omnibus servant;* 9.2 *quae multo ante praevisa sunt, languidius incurrunt.*) But perhaps Seneca's most original contribution to language structure lay in his use of the present participle. Certainly late republican prose authors had made ever more frequent use of this participle, and its substantival use is found in Plautus, but it is Seneca who first regularly uses it as the equivalent of a noun.[3] From the *Ad Marciam* we may cite *lugentium* (12.5) *consolantibus...et...miseram dicentibus* (16.3) *cedentium* and *praenavigantium* (18.7) *lugentem* (19.2) *ignorantibus* (22.3) *sciscitanti* (25.2).

But while the wider range of constructions available to Seneca is significant, we should perhaps look for greater influence in the philosopher's aims and the tastes of the people for whom he is writing. We have already seen how by Seneca's time writers of philosophy aimed to produce moral improvement in their readers, and how Seneca shared this concern.[4] Towards the end of his life Seneca was prepared to argue that philosophic advice was more effective if given in a conversational tone "*Plurimum proficit sermo, quia minutatim inrepit animo: disputationes praeparatae et effusae*

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[1] L. R. Palmer, *The Latin Language,* London, 1954, p. 311.
[2] Palmer, *op. cit.,* pp. 307-8.
[3] Palmer, *op. cit.,* p. 130.
[4] See *supra,* pp. 14ff.

audiente populo plus habent strepitus, minus familiaritatis. Philosophia bonum consilium est: consilium nemo clare dat."[5] If this was a long-standing conviction we should expect him to write in such a way that the reader would be lulled into the impression that he was having a conversation with the author.[6] This studied informality, as we might describe it, is achieved, even in the dialogues, by a number of stylistic features. A number of times an imagined interjection is put into Marcia's mouth.[7] Seneca uses exclamations, often labelled colloquial, to lend force to his arguments in much the same way as we do in private conversation. Examples of this use to arrest the reader's attention in the *Ad Marciam* are: *malum* (3.4), *mehercules*—an expression of which Seneca was particularly fond—(12.5 and 22.3), *mihi crede* (16.1 and following hard upon an imagined interjection), *di boni* (16.2) and *agedum* (18.1). Seneca's sentence structure also contains a number of informal features. A point may be amplified by a parenthesis rather than a formally related clause, as at 16.7 "*et momento (nam ut ad damna, ita ad incrementa rapidum veloxque tempus est) adolescunt amissis laetiora.*" (for further instances see 10.4; 17.2; 22.3 (three times) and 26.6). Rather than the period structure with the relationship of the thoughts precisely defined by subordinate clauses Seneca makes considerable use of parataxis, allowing one thought to follow naturally from another. We cite an extended example (10.4)

> *Rapite ex liberis voluptates, fruendos vos in vicem liberis date et sine dilatione omne gaudium haurite: nihil de hodierna nocte promittitur—nimis magnam advocationem dedi—nihil de hac hora. Festinandum est, instatur a tergo: iam disicietur iste comitatus, iam contubernia ista sublato clamore solventur. Rapina rerum omnium est: miseri nescitis in fuga vivere.*

B. L. Hijmans, in a study of some letters of Seneca, has shown that roughly a fifth of the composition was in periods.[8] The proportion of the *Ad Marciam* is very little higher, less than a quarter. It is not that Seneca could not write in periods, as the first sentence of our *consolatio* makes clear. What Seneca has done, for clear paedagogic purposes, is to adapt to

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[5] *Ep. Mor.* 38, 1, cited by H. MacL. Currie, The Younger Seneca's style: some observations, *B.I.C.S.* 13, 1966, pp. 78-9.

[6] It is worth recalling here that the ancients read aloud, not silently as is our custom, and that an author might therefore be able to produce just such an impression, see Currie, *op. cit.*, p. 86, and A. D. Leeman, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

[7] On this feature, see notes p. 53.

[8] B. L. Hijmans, *Inlaboratus et facilis. Aspects of Structure in some Letters of Seneca*, Leiden 1976, pp. 103ff.

philosophic discussion a sentence structure Quintilian[9] tells us was most suitable in conversation and letters, except where philosophy or politics were the subjects under discussion.

But although Seneca often maintains the impression of an informal approach, he knew that Marcia and her contemporaries might need inducement to read a consolatio, and just as Lucretius had smeared the bitter potion of philosophy with the honey of poetry, so Seneca, even though he held substance to be more important than style,[10] knew that the allurements of rhetorical display might be used to attract readers educated in the flourishing rhetorical schools of the first century. It was thus that Seneca became the leading exponent of the style popular in the middle years of the first century, and described as modern by those writing later in the century when classicism was again in vogue. If he presented ideas that might not always win approval, he would at least present them in a manner most likely to be acceptable. As Tacitus says "*fuit illi viro ingenium amoenum et temporis eius auribus accomodatum*".[11] *Abundant dulcibus vitiis*"[12] is the judgement of a more severe critic.

A sympathetic appraisal of the modern style is found in the discourse Tacitus puts into the mouth of M. Aper, one of the characters in his *Dialogus*. Aper argues that while in the late republic when the teaching of neither philosophers nor rhetors was well-known, anyone could win applause by following the precepts laid down in dry as dust rhetorical treatises and combining them with sentiments of a vaguely philosophical flavour, the greater sophistication of present-day judges and audiences would not endure the lengthy and plain speeches of earlier days. He then outlines what was required in present circumstances

> *Praecurrit hoc tempore iudex dicentem et, nisi aut cursu argumentorum aut colore sententiarum aut nitore et cultu descriptionum invitatus et corruptus est, aversatur. Vulgus quoque adsistentium et adfluens et vagus auditor adsuevit iam exigere laetitiam et pulchritudinem orationis;...Iam vero iuvenes in ipsa studiorum incude positi, qui profectus sui causa oratores sectantur, non solum audire sed etiam referre domum aliquid inlustre et dignum memoria volunt, traduntque in vicem et saepe in*

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[9] Quint., *Inst. Or.* IX, 4, 19 "*Est igitur ante omnia oratio alia vincta atque contexta, soluta alia, qualis in sermone et epistulis, nisi cum aliquid supra naturam suam tractant, ut de philosophia, de republica similibus.*"

[10] *Ep. Mor.* 115, 1, where Lucilius is urged "*Quaere quid scribas non quemadmodum*". On this whole subject A. D. Leeman, *op. cit.*, pp. 265ff.

[11] Tac., *Ann.* 13, 3.

[12] Quint., *Inst. Or* X, 1, 129.

colonias ac provincias suas scribunt, sive sensus aliquis arguta et brevi sententia effulsit, sive locus exquisito et poetico cultu enituit. Exigitur iam ab oratore etiam poeticus decor.[13]

The habit of reading aloud meant that what applied to an orator applied, albeit in a lesser degree, to any other author,[14] and it is clear from the passage quoted above the taste of the times favoured the poetic and the sententious. Amongst *sententiae* those which depended for their effect upon antithesis were highly favoured.[15]

Both poetic colouring and *sententiae* in abundance supported by such rhetorical features as *traiectio, homoioteleuton* and *contentio* are to be found in the *Ad Marciam.* While such words as *aerumna* (1.6 and 3.4), *amnis* (18.4 and 19.4), *nemus* (18.4), and *suboles* (16.7) are attested in earlier prose, they still have a distinctly poetic ring, as do the adjectival formulations in *osus,* such as *fabulosus* (17.2) and *speciosus* (2.2 and 22.2).[16] Likewise the use of a partitive genitive after a non-quantitative neuter plural, *in profunda terrarum* (25.2), though found in Sallust and becoming very popular in Late Latin prose, can be regarded as lending a poetic flavour to Seneca's writing. Favez[17] has compiled a lengthy list of *sententiae* in the *Ad Marciam* of which we shall restrict ourselves to three examples: (supported by *gradatio*) *Bruto libertatem debemus, Lucretiae Brutum* (16.2); (by *contentio*) *Caram te vita beneficio mortis habeo* 20.3); (and by *traiectio*) *Proscribentis in aeternum ipse proscripsit* (26.1). Quintilian might censure Seneca's over indulgence in the memorable phrase,[18] but such sententia were thoroughly in keeping with Seneca's aims as a writer. For the pithy phrase is remembered long after the detail of the argument is forgotten, and can thus be the means of a more lasting influence on one's fellows' behaviour.[19]

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[13] Tac., *Dial.* 20.

[14] See note 6 supra.

[15] Quint., *Inst. Or.* VIII, 5, 18 "*Facit quasdam sententias sola geminatio...Melior cum ex contrariis valet*".

[16] For a full discussion of poetic vocabulary, see A. Bourgery, *op. cit.,* pp. 223-43.

[17] Favez. *op. cit.,* p. LIII.

[18] Quint., *Inst. Or.* X, 1, 130 "*si rerum pondera minutissimis sententiis non fregisset consensi potius eruditorum quam puerorum amore comprobaretur.*

[19] It is perhaps worth recalling the place Seneca allows *praecepta* in philosophic education *Ep. Mor.* 94, 27-28 "*Praeterea ipsa quae praecipiuntur per se multum habent ponderis, utique si au carmini intexta sunt aut prosa oratione in sententiam coartata... Advocatum ista non quaerunt: adfectu ipsos tangunt et natura vim suam exercente proficiunt.*

THE TEXT OF THE AD MARCIAM

I have not undertaken an independent review of the manuscripts of Seneca's dialogues, but the non-specialist will possibly find a brief statement of the manuscript tradition useful, while the Senecan scholar will recognise the obvious debt of the present writer to Mr. L. D. Reynolds.[1]

Our oldest and most important manuscript of Seneca's *Dialogi,* Ambrosianus C90 inf. (= A), is a manuscript of the late eleventh century written in Beneventan script, and believed by E. A. Lowe[2] to have been copied in the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino. L. D. Reynolds[3] has shown that in all probability this manuscript corresponds to the Seneca which Desiderius, abbot of Monte Cassino 1058-1087, ordered to be made. For although the monastic chronicler[4] gives no indication of what works of Seneca were involved, it is clear that the South Italian poet Guaiferius of Salerno was very familiar with a number of the dialogues, works generally unknown between the sixth century when they were heavily used by Martin of Braga, and the thirteenth century when they are cited by a number of scholars working in Paris.[5] Manuscript A has one fascicle missing, which contained most of the *Ad Polybium,* and the beginning of the *De Ira* has been supplied by a later hand. Otherwise it contains all the dialogues. It has been heavily corrected, and M. C. Gertz[6] who studied it closely, believed that he could distinguish, apart from the hand which supplied the missing part of the *De Ira,* five further hands. Of these two, A^2 and A^3, writing in Carolingian script in the twelfth century, had access to another manuscript, possibly the archetype from which A was derived.

Apart from this manuscript, we have over a hundred others, a few of which belong to the thirteenth century, the majority to the fourteenth.

[1] L. D. Reynolds, The Mediaeval Tradition of Seneca's Dialogues, *C.Q.* N.S. 18, 1968, pp. 355-72, and L. Annaei Senecae *Dialogorum* (ed. L. D. Reynolds) Oxford 1977, pp. v-xviii.

[2] E. A. Lowe, *The Beneventan Script* (Oxford 1914, pp. 71, 341).

[3] L. D. Reynolds, The Mediaeval Tradition of Seneca's Dialogues, *C.Q.* N.S. 18, pp. 355-7.

[4] In *Monumenta Germaniae Historia, script* 7, pp. 746-7 "*Non solum autem in aedificiis, verum etiam in libris describendis operam Desiderius dare permaximam studuit. Codices namque nonnullos in hoc loco describi iussit, quorum haec nomina sunt; Augustinum contra Faustum...Ovidium Fastorum, Senecam...* Desiderius is of course the abbot of that name, not Desiderius, king of the Lombards 756-774, for which error see *inter alios* I. Viasino in L. Annaei Senecae *Dialogorum libri* VI, XI, XII, Turin, 1963, p. VI.

[5] L. D. Reynolds, *op. cit.,* pp. 356-7.

[6] M. C. Gertz, *L. Annaei Senecae Dialogorum libri XII,* Copenhagen, 1886, pp. viii-xx.

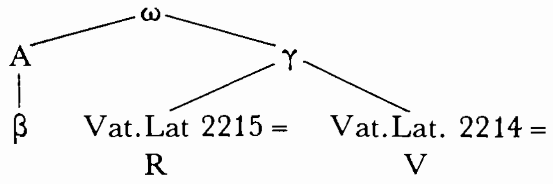
Although the widespread contamination which occurs when so many copies are made prevents the construction of a fully comprehensive stemma, certain important facts stand out. A large group of these, denoted by the sigla β, are ultimately derived from A. This is shown by the omission on two occasions of complete lines of A, and on an occasion in our *Consolatio* where the scribe has moved from the line he was copying to the exact point in the line below and continued with that line. Thus where A reads at 24.1

> tuos noluit / et in materno contubernio cum vix paternum
> liberi ferant per-
> severavit / adulescens statura pulchritudine certo corporis robore castris

manuscripts of family β omit the words *et in...perseveravit.* Being derivatives of A, they can have very little to contribute to the text of the *Ad Marciam.*[7]

There are however a smaller group of later manuscripts, denoted by the sigla γ. To this group belong two Vatican manuscripts, *Vaticanus lat.* 2214 and 2215, both belonging to the fourteenth century, and two Laurentian, *Laurentianus Plut.* 76.35 and 76.41. Though these are prodigiously corrupt, Reynolds[8] has shown that they probably belong to a tradition independent of A. We may cite an example of the evidence from the *De Ira.* In *De Ira* III, 21, 1 Seneca tells of the anger of Cyrus when he was obstructed by a river when proceeding to attack Babylon. A reads "*Gygem late fusum amnem vado transire temptavit.*" There is no question of that reading being correct, and many *recentiores* emend to *Gangem.* It is clear from Herodotus (1.189) that the river concerned is the Gyndes, the modern Dijala, and Orosius refers to the same incident. The Vatican manuscripts read correctly *gindem.* Although Erasmus made the correction independently, it may be regarded as doubtful whether a mediaeval scribe faced with *Gyges* would have reached the same conclusion, despite his possible acquaintance with Orosius. On the basis of this sort of evidence Reynolds concludes that the γ manuscripts do not look to A as their ultimate ancestor, and may offer independent evidence of what Seneca actually wrote.

We may set out our conclusions briefly in the following stemma.



[7] L. D. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, pp. 364-6.

[8] L. D. Reynolds, *op. cit.*, pp. 366-7 and L. Annaei Senecae *Dialogorum*, pp. xvi-xvii.

COMMENTARY

1. Seneca's introductory chapter has been divided by C.C. Grollios (*Seneca's Ad Marciam, Tradition and Originality,* Athens 1956, p. 84) and D. N. G. Reid (*Form and Content in Seneca's Moral Essays,* Edinburgh Thesis, 1973, p. 193) into two sections, the first of which (1.1-1.4) dwells on the virtues of Marcia, and forms a sort of '*captatio benevolentiae*' in which Seneca aims to win a sympathetic hearing from his addressee, while the second (1.5-1.8) outlines the approach Seneca intends to take in dealing with Marcia. In the first section, Seneca makes his approach very much like an advocate, and pictures himself as defending counsel attempting to make a case for *fortuna* (sc. Marciae) before Marcia as judge. We may notice the use of legal terminology in the passage, *tam inimico iudice, tam invidioso crimine,...fortunam tuam absolveres*; and the frequent use of rhetorical devices such as the above tricolon, the *traiectio* of *pietas* and *impie* (1.2), the repetitio of *optime* (1.3), and the climax of the same section in which there are three temporal clauses all beginning with *quamdiu,* the last of which contains three indirect questions beginning with *quid,* the third of these concluding with the tricolon *ingenio, animo, manu liber.* The basic theme of praise of Marcia, the judge, corresponds with the approach recommended by the rhetoricians in the *exordium,* when past good judgements may be properly brought forward in the way that Marcia's reaction to the death of her father is described. As the Auctor *ad Herennium* comments (I, 8) "*benivolos auditores facere quattuor modis possumus: ab nostra, ab adversariorum nostrorum, ab auditorum persona et ab rebus ipsis...Ab auditorum persona benevolentia colligitur si res eorum fortiter, sapienter, mansuete, magnifice iudicatas proferemus*;" The second part of the exordium which deals with the nature of the approach Seneca will take can then be seen as an attempt to introduce the *res,* as recommended by the rhetors. The medical imagery, *Plagam esse sanandam, magni vulneris cicatricem* (1.5), *leniore medicina* and the whole sentence *Nam vulnerum...in malum ulcus verterunt* (1.8) occurs in earlier Greek writings (Homer, *Iliad* 9, 436; 15, 393; Aeschylus *P. V.* 379-80), is introduced into philosophical literature by Plato (e.g. *Timaeus* 87Cff.) and is fully developed by the Stoics who used it widely. To the Stoics the emotions (πάθη) were diseases of the mind and Chrysippus in particular devoted great attention to comparing them with bodily illnesses (Cic, *Tusc.Disp.* IV, 23) describing grief as *tumor animi* (*ibid* IV, 67). Zeno had set a precedent for such treatment by comparing lust to inflammation (D.L. VII,

117). The comparison was, however, commonplace outside strictly Stoic circles by the time Seneca is writing and is found in Ovid (*Ex Ponto* 1, 3, 15ff.) and the Younger Pliny (*Ep* V, 16). Seneca uses similar imagery in writing to his mother (*Ad Helv* 1, 2-2, 2; 15.4).

1.1 ab infirmitate muliebris animi

The implication of female weakness suggested by the phrase seems at first sight inconsistent with the Stoic doctrine, enunciated later in the work (16, 1), that women have the same capacity for virtue as men. Yet the view that women are particularly prone to grief is commonly expressed by Seneca (*Ad Helviam*: 3, 2; 16, 1; *N.Q.*: IV, praef. 16). Though a passage like *Ad Marciam* 7, 3 is best explained from our knowledge of Seneca's use of the traditional material of the consolatory genre (see note ad *loc. cit.*) there can be no doubt that Seneca seriously believed that women were more prone than men to certain failings: pity (*De Clementia* II, 5, 1), anger (*De Clementia* I, 5, 5) as well as grief. However the thesis expounded by Cicero in his *De Officiis* (I, 30, 107—32, 115) can perhaps help us to reconcile these differences. For if the individual nature with which we have been endowed can produce diverse forms of equally virtuous behaviour, it is quite possible that, when corrupted, these natures may produce their special forms of vice. It is thus by virtue of this individual character—not, like *ratio*, shared with the whole species—that women can be described as more inclined to particular emotional disturbances. Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*, where he is writing in Stoic vein, provide an interesting commentary on this point (IV, 12, 27): "*Atque haec aliorum ad alios morbos proclivitas late patet; nam pertinet ad omnes perturbationes.*" For a full discussion see my article in *Mnemosyne* 26, 1973, pp. 170-77.

ut fortunam tuam absolveres

On the legal imagery, see *supra.* It would be natural for a Stoic to try to persuade Marcia to be favourably disposed to her fate, since for him the highest good for any individual was acquiescence in the will of fate, this being identified with God and right reason. The origin of this emphasis on submission to the divine will is Socratic (e.g. Plato, *Apol.* 19A, 22A, 40B). Seneca develops the theme of the necessity of coming to terms with the workings of fate in his consolatory arguments (ch. 6). For a discussion of the development of this theme under the early Stoa, see the note on 6.2 "*si sors immota...*"

1.2 excepto eo quod non optabas superstitem

Seneca here suggests that despite her great pietas, Marcia would probably not and certainly should not have wished her father to survive her.

The Romans, like the Greeks before them, felt strongly that when parents had to conduct the funerals of children, the proper ordering of things was reversed and this sentiment finds expression not only in literature (cf. Cic. *De Sen* 84 where Cato the Censor says of his dead son "*cuius a me corpus est crematum, quod contra decuit ab illo meum*" and Plutarch, *Ad Apoll* 119F) but also in epitaphs (cf. Buecheler, *Carmina Epigraphica Latina*, henceforth *C.E.L.*, 819 "*Debuit hic ante miseros sepelire parentes*"). Seneca's feelings clearly corresponded with those prevalent amongst his contemporaries, cf. 17.7 and note.

Mortem A. Cremuti Cordi parentis tui

Marcia's father Cremutius Cordus committed suicide by abstaining from food after two of Sejanus' clients, Satrius Secundus and Pinarius Natta, had brought a charge of *maiestas* against him in the senate (22, 4-5, Tac., *Ann.* 4, 34-35, Suet., *Tib.* 61.3; Dio Cassius, 57, 24, 2-4). The charge universally recorded concerns historical writings in which he had praised the statement of M. Brutus that Cassius was the last of the Romans, despite the fact that these writings had earlier been read in the presence of Augustus (Tac., Suet., Dio, *loc. cit.*). F. B. Marsh (*The reign of Tiberius,* London, 1931, pp. 292-3) suggests that Cremutius' suicide may have forestalled the promulgation of the major charge, and that his earlier writings, though of dubious relevance, were first assailed as an attempt to blacken his character. The case of Gnaeus Piso, where Fulcinius Trio raised the irrelevant matter of Piso's Spanish proconsulship, (Tac., *Ann.* III, 13) provides a parallel, but it is impossible to be certain, as the case of Clutorius Priscus, the eques who was executed in A.D. 21 after writing a poem anticipating the death of the emperor's son Drusus, almost certainly turned upon treasonable writing. (Tac., *Ann.* III, 49-51).

Both the facts of the case of Cremutius Cordus and the moral drawn from it are remarkably similar in the treatment given to it by Tacitus (*loc. cit.,*) and Seneca (here and at 22, 4-8). Both authors assign responsibility for the accusations to Sejanus' clients and name Satrius Secundus, though Seneca omits Pinarius Natta. Both make Cremutius' writings the basis of the charge though Seneca goes further and suggests a remark of the historian which may have provoked Sejanus' anger. Both record Cremutius' death by starvation, the burning of his books, and their subsequent republication. In terms of moral drawn we may compare Seneca's remark (1, 4) "*legitur,* [sc. Cremutius] *floret...vetustatem nullam timet; at illorum carnificum cito scelera quoque quibus solis memoriam meruerunt, tacebuntur.*" with the final remark attributed by Tacitus to Cremutius (*Ann.*

4, 35) "*nec deerunt, si damnatio ingruit, qui non modo Cassii et Bruti, set etiam mei meminerint*" and Tacitus' own conclusion (*ibid.*) "*neque aliud externi reges aut qui eadem saevitia usi sunt, nisi dedecus sibi atque illis gloriam peperere.*"

Tacitus' version of Cremutius' trial and death is very thoroughly examined by W. Suerbaum, Der Historiker und die Freiheit des Wortes, in G. Radke (ed.) Politik und Literarische Kunst im Werk des Tacitus, *Der Altspr. Unterr. Beiheft* I, 1971, pp. 61-99. Suerbaum has amply demonstrated that the speech in Tacitus is an accurate reflection of the defence offered by Cremutius.

1.3 Fudistique lacrimas palam

Basore rightly translates "You routed your tears" as opposed to the attempt of Favez (*Ad Marciam De Consolatione* Paris 1928, p. 3) to see *fundere* as a simple verb for the compound *effundere* or *profundere.* The decisive parallel is *Ad Helviam* 17.1 where the phrase *gemitus devorare* is used to indicate the suppression of grief. "*Volumus interim illum (sc. affectum doloris) obruere et devorare gemitus.*" However *lacrimas fundere* is certainly used with the meaning "weep" (Virgil *Aen.* III, 348 *et al.* cited in *O.L.D. fundo* 4a, p. 746) and the meaning is so ambiguous that a corruption of the text at this point cannot be ruled out.

Illo saeculo...impie facere

It was normal practice for Romans to describe politically troubled times in terms of a decline in ancient standards of private morals (cf. Sallust, *Cat.* 6-13 and D. C. Earl, *The Moral and Political Tradition of Rome*, London 1967, p. 17ff.). The intrigues and murders within the Imperial House in Tiberius' reign provide, however, good evidence of lack of appropriate familial affection. Seneca is extremely fond of the rhetorical device of *contentio* or antithesis particularly when he can juxtapose two similarly de rived words opposite in meaning such as *pietas* and *impie.*

Aliquam occasionem mutatio temporum dedit

Caligula gave permission for Cremutius' writings to be republished along with those of Titus Labienus and Cassius Severus (Suet., *Caligula* 16). Dio attests the importance of Marcia's efforts in the republication, but the impression Seneca gives below "*magnum detrimentum...non eruisses*" that Marcia was alone responsible is false, for a number of copies of Cremutius' work seem to have survived (Tac. *Ann* IV, 35, Dio 57, 24, 4.)

A vera illum vindicasti morte

Many educated Romans found it impossible to believe in any personal survival after the death of the body and hence were acutely concerned to

leave a lasting memorial of themselves, hoping to be able to say with Ennius (in Cic, *Tusc Disp* I, 15, 34) "*Volito vivos per ora virum*". Seneca's views on survival are discussed in the introduction to the last section of the book, but when writing in the consolatory tradition we would not expect Seneca to ignore a line of thought which had wide appeal to the Romans and special relevance in the case of Marcia and her father. This desire of upper-class Romans for posthumous fame is well illustrated by the letters of the younger Pliny, in which we find instances where statues, funeral games and biographies of the recently deceased are produced (*Ep.* II, 7; III, 10; VI, 34), and a concern amongst the group to produce worthy work and have their deeds recorded (*Ep.* 1, 3; 7, 33). In general the early Stoics attached little importance to posthumous fame, Chrysippus and Diogenes of Babylon reckoning it amongst things completely indifferent, subsequent Stoics classing it as ultimately indifferent, but preferred. (Cic., *De Fin.* III, 57; see also René Hoven, *Stoicisme et Stoiciens face au problème de l'au delà*, Liège 1971, p. 92). At one point however Seneca seems to take an attitude not found elsewhere in Stoicism, though asserting that it is Stoic doctrine, namely that "*claritatem quae post mortem contingit bonum esse.*" he devotes to this theme a lengthy exposition and defence (*Ep. Mor.* 102, 3-19). A. D. Leeman (Seneca and Posidonius: a philosophic commentary on Sen., *Ep.* 102, 3-19; *Mnemosyne* V, 1952, pp. 57-79; see esp. p. 62) rightly points out that *bonum* is used in the technical Stoic sense and not as an inaccurate translation of προηγμένον, but is perhaps somewhat too definite in asserting that Seneca is following Posidonius.

Magna illorum pars arserat
By order of a senatus consultum passed after Cremutius' death, the aediles burned copies of his books in the capital and the municipal magistrates did so elsewhere (Tac., *Ann.* 4, 35, Dio, 57, 24).

Incorrupta rerum fides
Perhaps Seneca exaggerates, for Quintilian suggests that in the republished form those parts which might offend a sensitive emperor were cut out (*Inst. Or.* X, 1, 104).

1.4 Eloquentiam et libertatem
Quintilian (*loc. cit.*) likewise talks of the praise given to Cremutius' '*libertas*' or outspoken frankness, and describes his eloquence in terms of *elatum abunde spiritum et audaces sententias.*

Eloquentia and *libertas* are the two qualities which Tacitus regarded as characteristic of republican historiography (*Hist.* 1.1, *res populi Romani*

memorabantur pari eloquentia ac libertate.) while in the speech attributed to Cremutius, Livy is also characterised as "*eloquentiae ac fidei praeclarus*" (*Ann.* 4.34). In the latter phrase *fidei* is roughly equivalent to *libertatis* and means 'impartiality'. Cremutius' reputation was almost certainly justified for, as Koestermann points out (ad *Ann.* 4, 34), he is one of the few people with whom Tacitus is willing to identify himself.

Legitur floret, in manus hominum, in pectora receptus

Cremutius' reputation was high in the first century, and he is named by Quintilian amongst the five historians most important for a would-be orator to study in a group which includes Livy and Sallust. A fragment is preserved by the Elder Seneca at *Suasoria* 6.19.

1.5 antiqua mala in memoriam reduxi

A method of restoring the self-confidence of a person defeated by his present situation, which has a long tradition. A commonplace of antiquity, first found in Homer, *Odyssey* 20, 18: τέτλαθι δὴ κραδίη καὶ κύντερον ἄλλο ποτ' ἔτλης "be resolute then, my heart; you have endured worse before"—and soon taken up by the philosophers. The line is quoted in Plato, *Phaedo* 94e. In Latin literature, the hardening effect of previous distresses is introdced by Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 28, 67), translating from the *Phrixus,* a lost tragedy of Euripides. Seneca is very fond of this theme, found at the beginning of the *Ad Helviam* (cf. 2, 2; "*Omnis itaque luctus suos, omnia lugubria admovebo; hoc erit non molli via mederi, sed urere ac secare. Quid consequar? Ut pudeat animum tot miseriarum victorem aegre ferre unum vulnus in corpore tam cicatricoso.*"

plagam esse sanandam

See introductory note to chapter 1.

magis iam ex consuetudine quam ex desiderio fluentis

consuetudine refers to Marcia's habits rather than simple custom, although Marcia's mourning, elaborately maintained for three years (1.7), was in keeping with the social behaviour of aristocratic women of the period. Though ten months mourning for a husband was legally permissible, mothers were exceeding this when their sons died, and some women, once they had assumed mourning garb, never took it off (*Ad Helv.* 16, 1-2).

in filii locum

This is the first explicit reference to the source of Marcia's grief, the loss of her son Metilius. For our limited knowledge about Metilius, see the introductory section "The Date and Purpose of the *Ad Marciam*".

1.6 studia, hereditarium et paternum bonum

Since Marcia's father was a historian and she herself had played a major part in the republication of his work, we may presume that her *studia* were the reading and investigation of history.

illud ipsum naturale remedium temporis

For a full discussion of the development of this theme, see 8.1 and note, where Seneca develops this theme more fully.

1.7 tertius iam praeterit annus

This statement enables us to set a terminus post quem for the work of 39/40. Since the death of her son, Marcia has found no comfort in *studia, hereditarium et paternum bonum* (1.6) but had earlier republished her father's histories, something not permitted until the beginning of Gaius' principate. For a full discussion of the date of the *Ad Marciam,* see introductory section, The Date and Purpose of the *Ad Marciam.*

omnia vitia

In strict Stoic doctrine all the emotions (Gk. πάθη, Lat. *perturbationes animi*) including grief (Gk. λύπη, Lat. *aegritudo, tristitia*) were forbidden to the wise man as an "irrational mental contraction" (Diogenes Laertius VII, 112). Chrysippus defined "*aegritudo*" as: "*nulla alia nisi opinio et iudicium praesentis et urguentis mali*" (Cicero, *Tusc. Disp.* III, 25, 61), which closely corresponds to the definition ascribed to Zeno in the same work (IV, 6, 11). But the Stoics always maintained that there was no evil (*malum*) except for the morally base. Hence grief because of the death of a loved one, was false assent to the proposition that one's situation was evil: "*imbecillam adsensionem*" (*Tusc. Disp.* IV, 7, 15). Chrysippus maintained that *aegritudo* was aggravated by a second false opinion "*oportere, rectum esse, ad officium pertinere ferre illud aegre quod acciderit.*" (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 26, 61), for example the opinion that the deceased expected a proper display of mourning. It is often held that the later Stoics moderated the harsher attitudes of their predecessors towards the emotions. C. C. Grollios (*op. cit.,* pp. 32-33) follows the traditional interpretation when he writes: "following the Stoics, he (Seneca) denounces the emotions. Nevertheless where a practical application is involved he chooses to modify the Stoic austerity...we may therefore be justified if we assume that he consciously chooses to remove from the Stoic principle of *apatheia* when practical issues are involved." I do not entirely share this view, though it is certainly true that later Stoics allowed the '*opinio mali*' to cause temporary bodily disturbance. However, they sharply differentiated this bodily disturbance from

any mental assent to a false proposition, and the wise man would never fall into a state described by the noun, '*aegritudo*'. Following the Stoics, Cicero writes "*hoc detracto, quod totum est voluntarium, aegritudo erit sublata illa maerens, morsus tamen et contractiunculae quaedam animi relinquentur.*" (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 34, 83).

Seneca draws a similar contrast between immediate bodily reactions and the response of the soul to some disadvantage: "*non educo sapientem ex hominum numero nec dolores ab illo sicut ab aliqua rupe nullum sensum admittente summoveo. Memini ex duabus illum partibus esse compositum: altera est inrationalis, haec mordetur, uritur, dolet; altera rationalis, haec inconcussas opiniones habet, intrepida est et indomita... Ne extra rerum naturam vagari virtus nostra videatur, et tremet sapiens et dolebit et expallescet. Hi omnes corporis sensus sunt. Ubi ergo calamitas, ubi illud malum verum est? illic scilicet, si ista animum detrahunt...*" (*Ep. Mor.* 71, 27 29). For a similar distinction see *De ira* II, 3). However, if we are to believe Seneca, Zeno himself had gone this far (*De Ira* I, 16, 6) and this is far removed from the 'moderation' of the emotions recommended by the Peripatetics. It is perhaps significant that Seneca appears most to favour the mean in the *Consolationes* (cf. *Ad Marciam* 7, *Ad Polybium* 18, 5-6, and letters in the consolatory tradition; e.g. *Ep. Mor.* 63, 1) where he is bringing forward the arguments of all the philosophers designed to curb grief in the hope that some would succeed. This was part of an established generic tradition which Cicero followed (*Tusc. Disp.* III. 31, 76). He takes a completely Stoic stance on the emotions when writing 'on anger' to his brother Novatus, expressly rejecting the Aristotelian thesis that anger is necessary and should be employed "not as a commander but as a soldier" (*De Ira* I, 9, 2). Towards the conclusion of the treatise he writes "*careamus hoc malo, purgemusque mentem et exstirpemus radicitus...et iram non temperemus sed ex toto removeamus—quod enim malae rei temperamentum est?*" (*ibid.* III, 42, 1). Writing to Nero he is similarly uncompromising in his attitude to pity (*misericordia*) in which he advances the thesis that though the wise man will assist the afflictions of his fellows, he will not have his mood changed by them (*De Clementia* II, 4, 4-6).

1.8 Cupissem itaque...contra inveterata pugnandum est

The theory that one must choose the right time in applying a particular remedy to a spiritual disease goes back to Aeschylus (*P. V.* 381-2) and is regarded by Cicero as a valid principle in dealing with *aegritudo* (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 31, 76). Seneca applies this theory to all spiritual disorders, (*Ep. Mor.* 64.8 *Animi remedia inventa sunt ab antiquis; quomodo autem admoveantur et quando nostri operis est quaerere*). More usually his argument is that

premature rather than belated application is harmful both in the case of *ira* (*De Ira* III, 39, 2) and of *aegritudo* (*Ad Helv.* 1.2) but his argument here is simply that the advanced progress of the disease necessitates a different kind of treatment.

2.1 Scio a praeceptis...in exemplis desinere

C. Favez (*Ad Marciam* p. XXVII) rightly describes the custom of precepts before examples as "une convention". The extent to which it was binding is however uncertain because so many of the consolationes written in antiquity have failed to survive. In Plutarch's *Consolatio ad Apollonium* the list of those "who nobly and high-mindedly and calmly have been resigned to the deaths which have befallen their sons" follows the praecepta, and what follows may justly be regarded as peroratio. In Seneca's other formal consolationes, the examples of women who have bravely borne separation from their sons and of men who have shown resolution at the death of their brothers follow the philosophic arguments (*Ad Helviam* 15-6, Ad Polybium 14-16, 3). However, many of the surviving consolatory treatises and epistles are too brief to contain exempla at all (Plutarch, *Cons. ad uxorem,* Cicero, *Ad Fam.* V, 16; VI, 3; *Ad Att.* XII, 10; *Ad Brut.* 1.9). Dr. Grollios rightly comments that "Generally speaking Seneca usually shows little or no interest in adhering to a rigid scheme" and in fact in letter 63 he introduces the example of Niobe at a very early point (*Ep. Mor.* 63, 2). Moreover, we probably do not have any attempt at a rigid '*divisio*' here, and again Dr. Grollios rightly says (*op. cit.* p. 19) that Seneca has not promised a reversal of the usual order, merely a change. K. Abel (*Bauformen in Senecas Dialogen*, Heidelberg 1967, pp. 20-22) has detected good psychological reasons for splitting the *exempla.* The example of Livia who showed resolution, but nevertheless needed the help of Areius can encourage Marcia towards moderation of grief (*metriopatheia*). However after a number of general precepts have been given, the second group of examples (12.6—16.4), drawn from the traditional lists, can encourage her to take one step further. Those who gave little or no time to mourning can assist a person already strenghtened by *praecepta* to strive for the Stoic ideal of complete absence of grief (*apatheia*).

Aliter cum alio agendum est

The wording is reminiscent of Cicero's argument in favour of bringing forward every possible consolatory argument "*alius enim alio modo movetur*" (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 31, 76) cf. *ibid.* III, 33, 79. This change in customary procedure is particularly suitable in Marcia's case, for as the daughter of a historian she was most likely to be impressed by "*clara nomina*". Seneca's

practice here is in accord with the general theory that the type of cure must be fitted to the particular circumstances of the patient (cf. 1.8 and note).

2.2 Duo tibi ponam...exempla

Seneca's inclusion here of an example not to follow is parallelled by his description of his own behaviour in a consolatory letter to Lucilius "*Haec tibi scribo, is qui Annaeum Serenum carissimum mihi tam immodice flevi ut, quod minime velim, inter exempla sim eorum quos dolor vicit* (Ep. Mor. 63, 14). In his *De Ira* (III, 16, 3-21, 5) Seneca includes a long list of examples not to follow before proceeding to those of a more healthy variety. Seneca's use of almost contemporary exempla is again unusual but part of his normal practice. H. W. Litchfield (*National Exempla Virtutis in Roman Literature, Harvard Studies in Classical Philology,* 25, 1914) has shown the comparative rarity, even in literature of the Imperial period, of exempla of the Augustan and post-Augustan periods. This section is in fact the only exemplary citation of Octavia and Livia, notable figures though they were. Seneca shows similar originality in his citation of the courage of Iulius Canus, whose resistance under Caligula cost him his life (*De Tranq. Animi* 14, 4-10).

maiore damno

A difficult phrase, particularly when one considers that Marcellus was Octavia's only son, whereas Livia was also the mother of Tiberius. Favez suggests that Drusus' greater age and achievements at the time of his death are the reason for this description, and support for this view can be found in *Ep. Mor.* 99, 2 where Marullus is upbraided for making too much of the death of his infant son "*Tam molliter tu fers mortem filii? quid faceres si amicum perdidisses? Decessit filius incertae spei, parvulus; pusillum temporis perit*".

2.3 Octavia

Octavia the Younger, full sister to Augustus and daughter to Gaius Octavius (praetor 61 B.C.) by his second wife Atia. After the death of her first husband, C. Marcellus in 40 B.C., she was very much an instrument of her brother in his political dealings with his triumviral colleague Antony, to whom she was married in 40, and by whom she was divorced in 32 B.C. Despite her excessive mourning for her son Marcellus, she showed a remarkable maternal affection not only for her own daughters by Marcellus and Antony, but also for Antony's children by Fulvia and Cleopatra, for whose upbringing she was also responsible (Plutarch, *Antonius* 87).

Livia

Livia Drusilla, the daughter of M. Livius Drusus Claudianus who was killed in the proscriptions following Philippi, was born in 58 B.C. Her first husband was Tiberius Claudius Nero, who after holding a quaestorship and praetorship had backed Lucius Antonius in the Perusine War. He was forced to flee first to Sextus Pompeius and then to Antony and on his reconciliation with Octavian in 38 gave his wife, who had accompanied him in flight, to his former enemy. At this time Livia had already borne Tiberius one son, the future emperor Tiberius, and was again pregnant. Nevertheless Livia became Octavian's third wife and their happy but childless marriage lasted until Augustus' death in 14 A.D. Suetonius says of Augustus "*Liviam Drusillam...dilexitque et probavit unice ac perseveranter*" (*Augustus* 62). On Augustus' death, Livia was given the title Augusta by his will (*ibid.* 101) and survived until 29 A.D., and according to Tacitus continued to hold considerable influence (Tac., *Ann.* I-VI, esp. V, 1-3; Suetonius, *Augustus* 62; 101; *Tiberius* 4; Dio Cassius, XLVIII-LVIII).

Marcellus

Marcus Claudius Marcellus was the son of Octavia and the consul of 50 B.C. C. Claudius Marcellus. He was married to Augustus' daughter Julia in 25 B.C. He died at Baiae, most probably in his eighteenth year (Servius *Ad Aen.* VI, 861). Servius' precise age is preferable to that of Propertius whose phrase "*vicesimus annus*" reads like a poetic approximation. Servius' younger age is also supported by Suetonius' statement that Julia was married to Marcellus when he was "not much more than a boy" (Suet. *Aug.* 63, 1). The probable date of his death is 23 B.C., as given by Dio (53, 30, 4) rather than 22, which can be deduced by applying precisely the rather vague form of dating given by Velleius Paterculus "*Ante triennium fere quam Egnatianum scelus erumperet, circa Murenae Caepionisque coniurationis tempus*" (II. 93).

in quem onus imperii inclinare

Marcellus was aedile at the time of his death, and during his tenure of that office had given magnificent games (Velleius Paterculus *loc. cit.*) and sheltered the forum with awnings, all of which had been paid for by the money of his uncle (Dio, 53, 31, 2-3) and his mother (Propertius *Eleg.* III, 18, 14). During the previous year he had been given the right to stand for the consulship ten years before the normal time (Dio, 53, 28, 3). Yet though in common talk he was marked out as Augustus' successor (Vell. Pat. II, 93, 1, Dio 53, 30) Augustus when ill during the same year had given his signet ring to Agrippa, possibly, as Dio suggests (*loc. cit.*),

because at this stage he did not consider Marcellus experienced enough to handle an extremely complex political situation. Nevertheless Agrippa's departure Eastwards after the recovery of Augustus, whether his motive was to escape Marcellus' jealousy (Dio 53, 32, 1; Velleius Paterculus II, 93, 2) or to avoid overshadowing Marcellus by his presence (Suet. *Tiberius* 10, 1), suggests that the princeps had resumed his plan to groom Marcellus for the succession.

2.4 per omne vitae suae tempus

That is for a further twelve years. Octavia's death in 11 B.C. is recorded by Suetonius (*Augustus* 61, 2) and Dio (54.35). Her retirement from public life following Marcellus' death which is described in the chapter as insulting "*non sine contumelia omnium suorum*" does not appear to have been so interpreted by Augustus. He paid her high honour both during her lifetime and after death, when she was given an elaborate state funeral, the princeps himself pronouncing the eulogy over the body in the temple of Julius.

2.5 Et in Liviam maxime furebat

Octavia's anger against Livia may well have been factual, though the grounds given seem to be an anachronism based on the actual succession of her elder son Tiberius in 14 A.D. Although Nero Drusus, like Tiberius earlier, was given the right to stand for offices five years before the normal time, it is clear that from the period following Marcellus' death, Agrippa seemed to be the destined successor and occupied that position certainly until the adoption by Augustus of his grandsons Gaius and Lucius in 17 B.C. It should be noted that right until his death in 12 B.C. Agrippa and not a son of Livia shared the *tribunicia potestas* of Augustus. A far more likely explanation of Octavia's reaction is found in the rumour that Livia had been responsible for the poisoning of Marcellus (Dio 53, 33, 4). For incredible though the rumour is, the premature death of a princeps or his destined successor frequently gave rise to such rumours, and the bereaved womenfolk were by no means always reluctant to believe such rumours. For rumours of poisoning, cf. the deaths of Gaius and Lucius (Dio 55, 10a, 6), Germanicus (Tac., *Ann.* II, 69) and for an instance of belief, cf. the behaviour of Agrippina and her circle (Tac., *Ann.* II, 71, 73; III, 12).

carmina celebranda Marcelli memoriae composita

Not only the famous eulogy in Vergil's *Aeneid* (VI, 861-883) at which Octavia is alleged to have swooned, (Suetonius, *Vita Vergilii,* 32) and hence the interpretation '*reiecit*', but also an elegy of Propertius, presumably written almost immediately after Marcellus' death (Prop. *Eleg.* III, 18).

adsidentibus liberis, nepotibus

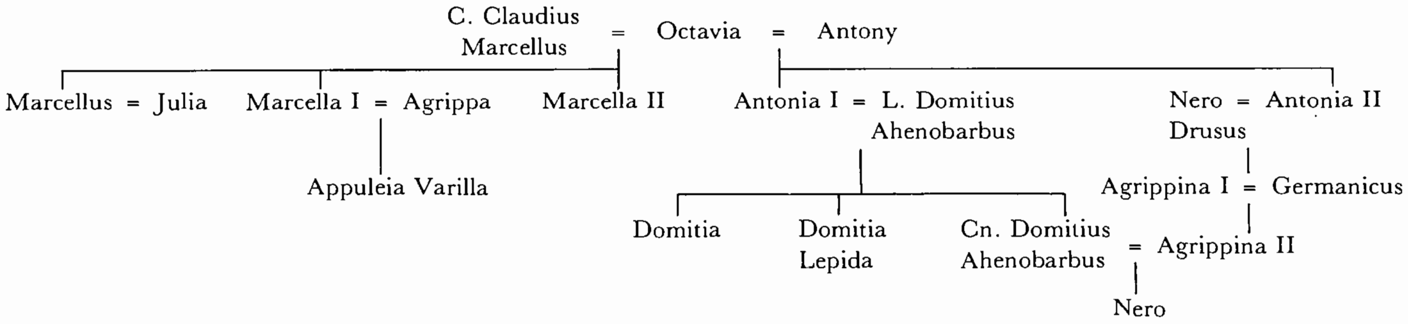
Marcellus was survived by two sisters and two step-sisters, the latter being the daughters of Octavia and Marcus Antonius. Marcella maior had until Marcellus' death been married to Agrippa and had had by him a daughter Appuleia Varilla, who was convicted of adultery in A.D. 17. Of the two step-sisters, Antonia the elder was married to L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, cos 16 B.C. and executor of Augustus' will. The couple had two daughters and a son, the latter being the father of Nero. The younger Antonia was married to Nero Drusus and before Octavia's death the couple produced their first son, Germanicus. These relationships are shown in the following family tree.

non sine contumelia omnium suorum quibus salvis orba sibi videtur

Seneca is especially fond of this theme that continuous mourning is insulting to one's surviving friends and kin, whom he regards as a natural source of comfort in bereavement. Seneca will remind Marcia of her own unfairness when dealing with her situation (16.9) "*Est quidem haec natura mortalium ut nihil magis placeat quam quod amissum est: iniquiores sumus adversus relicta ereptorum desiderio.*" Polybius is warned to think of his surviving kin (*Ad Polyb.* 12, 1) "*ne videatur omnibus plus apud te valere unus dolor quam haec tam multa solacia*", and also of Claudius Caesar to whom he claims to be so attached, "*adversus felicitatem tuam parum gratum es, si tibi quicquam hoc salvo flere permittis*" (*ibid.* 7, 4). Helvia is advised to think of her surviving children and grandchildren (*Ad Helv.* 18, 1-6), while Lucilius is told that one who does not find sufficient comfort in other friends when one is removed, underestimates and deserves ill of them. (*Ep. Mor.* 63, 10). For a discussion of the origin of the theme of friends as 'solacia' see the note on 16.9.

3.1 filium Drusum, magnum futurum principem, iam magnum ducem

Drusus was the son of Livia and Tiberius Claudius Nero, born in 38 B.C., three months after Livia had been married, with Nero's consent, to Octavian. He was originally given the praenomen Decimus, but this was subsequently changed to Nero. Livia's unusual circumstances at the time of his birth, and his father's decision in his will to entrust guardianship of Nero Drusus and his elder brother Tiberius to Livia and Octavian led to speculation among the populace about the true paternity of the child, and the line circulated 'τοῖς εὐτυχοῦσι καὶ τρίμηνα παιδία' (Suet. *Claud.* 1, 1, Dio, 48, 44, 5). Nero Drusus died in Germany in 9 B.C. in his thirtieth year. Consul in the year he died, his prospects were estimated according to the


C. Claudius Marcellus
Octavia
Antony
Marcellus
Julia
Marcella I
Agrippa
Marcella II
Antonia I
L. Domitius Ahenobarbus
Nero Drusus
Antonia II
Appuleia Varilla
Domitia
Domitia Lepida
Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus
Agrippina I
Germanicus
Agrippina II
Nero

open favour Augustus showed to him. "*Augustus tanto opere et vivum dilexerit, ut coheredem semper filiis instituerit, sicut quondam in senatu professus est*" (Suet. *Claud.* 1, 5). However the phraseology suggests that Augustus did not intend to adopt him formally as he did Gaius and Lucius. His military prowess was first shown in campaigns against the Vindelici and the Rhaetii which he conducted in conjunction with Tiberius in 15 B.C. and in honour of which Horace wrote two eulogistic odes (IV, 4 and IV, 14). Syme (*C.A.H.* vol. X pp. 358ff.) rightly points out that Drusus' campaigns in Germany 12-9 B.C. were little more than punitive raids, but one must remember that this was completely new territory to the Romans, and much valuable exploratory work was done by land and sea. Even if the tension between the Chatti and the Sugambri was helpful, to reach the Elbe was no mean achievement. The fullest ancient description of Drusus' activities is found in Dio Cassius (54, 32-33, 55, 1-2).

In expeditione decesserat

He died as a result of a broken leg, sustained when his horse fell on him while returning from the Elbe. He survived the accident about thirty days, long enough for Tiberius to reach him (Livy *Periochae* 142). The death was obviously soon surrounded by legend. Both Suetonius and Dio suggest disease as a cause of death, and Suetonius mentions, though not approvingly, rumours of poison (Suet. *Claud.* 1, 4, Dio 55, 1-2).

funus triumpho simillimum

Plans for a triumph to honour Drusus' victories in Germany were already under way before his accident and death supervened. Livia's part in organising such events was to have been considerable. Tiberius hastened to his brother's side and seems to have been responsible for organising the funeral procession. The body was adorned with victory laurels, military tribunes bore the body to winter quarters of the army, and from there the dignitaries of local municipia bore the body to Rome, following the route Drusus had taken after his Rhaetian victories. Broken fasces preceded the cortege and Tiberius himself accompanied it on foot for the whole journey. Before the cremation eulogies were delivered in the forum by Tiberius, and in the Circus Flaminus. (*Cons. ad Liv.* 25-30, 169-178, 495-66; Pliny, *N.H.* 7.84; Livy, *Epitome* 142; Suet. *Claud.* 1, 1-3; Dio, 55, 1, 1-2, 4.)

3.2 longo itinere

Probably from Ticinum, the modern Pavia, to Rome. It is known that Augustus accompanied the body over this stage of the journey (Tac. *Ann.* 3.5).

tumulo

The mausoleum of Augustus on the Campus Martius, built by Augustus in 28 B.C. for himself and his family. The ashes of Marcellus were the first to be placed there (23 B.C.) and those of Nerva the last 98 A.D. For further details see E. Nash, *Pictorial Dictionary of Ancient Rome*, Vol. II, New York, 1962, pp. 38-43.

simul et illum et dolorem suum posuit

C. Favez (*Op. cit.* p. 13) suggested that this characterisation of Livia is inconsistent with the picture drawn in ch. 4-5 where Livia is shown receiving consolation from the philosopher Areus. One must remember, however, that the imagined scene is of Livia "*in primo fervore*" of her grief, and still keeping her feelings from public view, and even from Augustus and Tiberius (*Ad Marciam* 4.2). Moreover the philosopher's injunction not to be intractable could mean "don't start behaving in this way" quite as easily as "stop behaving thus". What is more interesting is to notice the different portrait of Livia in the anonymous "*Consolatio ad Liviam*" which in a long section (95-166) describing Livia's grief, compares her behaviour to that of Procne and the mother and sisters of Phaethon. According to this source Livia's efforts at restraint were followed by an even greater profusion of tears when her self-control broke down. One feels that Seneca's main concern at this point is not so much to write with historical accuracy, as to draw in starkest terms the antithesis between the most inexcusable behaviour, that of Octavia, and the ideal, to which Livia is made to correspond. However the well-attested aversion of both Tiberius and his mother to elaborate displays of mourning suggest that Seneca is nearer to the truth than the anonymous consolator.

One may notice a similar disparity in the description of Tiberius' behaviour by the respective authors. Seneca portrays him as stoically upholding the dignitas of a Roman consular, repressing his own grief and restraining that of the army (*Ad Polyb.* 15, 5). The author of the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, on the other hand, writes (85-8) *Vidimus adtonitum fraterna morte Neronem / pallida promissa flere per ora coma / dissimilemque sui voltu profitente dolorem / ei mihi, quam toto luctus in ore fuit.* The most likely explanation of such disparity lies in the different attitudes to grief traditional in philosophic and poetic consolationes. For while in the former a public parade of grief is considered a reprehensible sign of weakness, in the poetic consolationes it is favourably treated as evidence of great affection. Cf. Statius, *Silvae* V, 1, 30-42, where Abascantus' bitter and long-continued tears for Priscilla are regarded as praiseworthy rather than reason for criticism, and *ibid* II, 6, 82-5; V, 5, 56-64.

3.3 triste matribus omen occurres

An omen was originally a chance utterance applied by someone other than the speaker to his or her/own circumstances. A notable example of this was when Tertia, daughter of Aemilius Paulus, victor of Pydna, on the day her father had been awarded the command against King Perses of Macedonia, reported to him that a pup named Persa had died. This Aemilius interpreted as a presage of Perses' future defeat. As a development of this idea chance events as well as chance utterances came to be thought of as significant, so that, for example, to strike one's foot against a stone was regarded as a bad omen at the beginning of a journey. (Cic., *De Div.* I, 45, 102—46, 104; II, 40, 83-84.) In this situation Seneca imagines that Marcia, if she shows obvious signs of grief will meet other mothers and immediately stir in their minds thoughts of similar losses on their part. In a *Controversia* of Seneca the Elder (4, 1) a father grieving the loss of three children beside their grave is dragged away by a debauched youth. He remarks that he ought to live beside the grave "*ne cui de nuptiis, ne cui de liberis cogitanti dirum omen occurram.*" For a thorough discussion of the whole subject of omens, see A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination dans L'Antiquité,* Vol. IV, Paris, 1882, pp. 134-44.

3.4 malum

The indeclinable oath *malum* 'the devil!' is frequent in comedy, and though found in Cicero (*De Off.* II, 53; *In Verr.* II, 43) probably retained a colloquial flavour and was used by Seneca to maintain a conversational tone. For a discussion of this familiar style, see Favez, *op. cit.* pp. LV-LVII.

mala sua augere

The reading of the γ tradition makes perfect sense, and though it is difficult to explain the introduction of *non* into A and those manuscripts dependent upon it, it seems needless to make further conjectures.

4.1 Nec te ad fortiora ducam praecepta

Seneca is here referring to the doctrine of the Stoics, for an explanation of which see the notes 1.7 *omnia vitia* and 7.1 *sed plus est quod opinio adicit.* Once again one should stress that despite the strong language *ut inhumano ferre humana iubeam modo* Seneca is not here rejecting the Stoic doctrine that no '*aegritudo*' is permissible, but taking the line that arguments on such a point have little relevance after three years of grief. One may compare *Ep. Mor.* 13, 4 where Seneca declines to use Stoic arguments but still asserts their validity "*Omittamus haec magna verba sed, di boni, vera.*"

Ad arbitrum...inter nos quaeretur

Seneca here pictures himself as ready to argue a case against Marcia at a judicial *quaestio.* An *arbiter* was a person legally appointed and given wide discretionary power to settle an issue (*O.L.D.* fasc 1, p. 159 *arbiter* (2, a)) whilst *quaeri* is used to mean 'to be the subject of legal investigation (Cic., *Pro Rosc.* 41, 119 "*dum de patris morte quaereretur*" Suet., *Tib.* 58 "*res in senatu...quaesita est*").

4.2 in primo fervore cum maxime impatientes ferocesque sunt miseriae

The idea that the passions were fiercest at their first onset has a currency in philosophic literature from the time of Chrysippus onwards. Of all the Stoics, Chrysippus was most inclined to compare the passions and psychological disturbances to bodily illness (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* IV, 23) and expressly forbade the application of remedies to fresh spiritual disorders (*ibid.* IV, 63 "*quodque vetat Chrysippus, ad recentis quasi tumores animi remedium adhibere, id nos fecimus.*") Posidonius explained that after the passage of time other desires would influence the irrational part of the soul and its new desires would make its divided attention more amenable to the rational part (Posidonius, *Fr.* 166, Edelstein and Kidd). Although Seneca was probably aware that this idea had a Stoic base, it had become a commonplace by the time he was writing (Ovid, *Ex Ponto* 1, 3, 15-16; Pliny *Ep.* V, 16 "..*sic recens animi dolor consolationes reicit.*") It might be noted that this conflicts with what Seneca says about the best time of treatment at 1.8, but in other works Seneca favours the Chrysippean approach, not only for consolatory purposes (*Ad Helv.* 1, 2) but also in dealing with anger (*De Ira* III, 39, 2).

consolandam se Areo philosopho viri sui

Madvig's conjecture is widely accepted as the most suitable emendation for the reading of A *consulareo philosopho.* A's reading gives no object to *praebuit,* and no suitable candidate can be found amongst Augustus' consulars to play the role of domestic philosopher. It was the custom of prominent Romans with cultural pretensions to maintain a philosopher as part of their household much as nobles of the middle ages and later maintained domestic chaplains. We know, for example, of Cicero's household philosopher Diodotus who lived in his house for many years (Cic. *Acad.* II, 115), of Egnatius Celer who was a client of Barea Soranus, proconsul of Asia under Nero (Tac., *Ann.* 16, 32), and the Cynic Demetrius who was with Thrasea Paetus at his death (*ibid.,* 16, 34-5).

Areus, identified with Arius Didymus whose fragments were collected by Diels (*Doxographi Graeci* pp. 447-74), was a close companion first of Maecenas, then of Octavian from the 30's B.C., and was, with his sons Dionysus and Nicanor, a part of Augustus' court. A native of Alexandria, he was clearly high in Octavian's favour, for he rode into Alexandria beside him in 30 B.C. and his friendship was one of the reasons given by the victor of Actium for his lenient treatment of the inhabitants of Egypt and its capital. (Suet., *Div. Aug.* 89; Dio Cassius 51, 16; Plutarch *Antonius* 80; Aelian *V.H.* 12, 25.) If the emperor Julian is to be believed, Areus was offered, but turned down the governorship of Egypt (Julian *Or.* VIII, 265C-D). Philosophically he appears to have belonged to the Academy, but collected the teachings of a number of schools in keeping with the eclectic tendencies of the first century B.C.

cuius pietas

Although Seneca does use the word '*pietas*' to describe appropriate fraternal affection for a deceased brother (*Ad Polyb.* 5.4) Suetonius gives the impression that there was little love lost between Tiberius and Nero Drusus (*Tib.* 50) and the word is far more likely to refer to his well-attested respect for his mother (Tac. *Ann.* 5, 3 "*inveteratum erga matrem obsequium*").

acerbo

See note to *acerba funera* (9.2).

nihil sibi nisi numerum deesse sentiret

Seneca uses exactly the same terminology to make Helvia think of the consolation she can derive from his brothers though he himself is in exile. "*Audacter possum promittere: nihil tibi deerit praeter numerum.*" (*Ad Helv.* 18, 3).

4.3 Hic ut opinor aditus illi fuit

E. Zeller (*A History of Eclecticism*, London, 1882, Eng. Trans. p. 106) put forward the view that Seneca quotes considerable fragments of the Alexandrian philosopher's consolatory Treatise in the subsequent so-called 'consolatio Arei'. This basic view was modified in detail by M. Pohlenz (*Die Stoa*, Göttingen, 1948, p. 125) and R. Kassel (*Untersuchungen zur griechischen und römischen Konsolationslitteratur*, Munich, 1958, p. 27) who argued that Seneca freely adapted the work of Areus, which he had before him at the time of writing. C. C. Grollios (*op. cit.* pp. 26-27) rejects this view on two grounds, firstly that Seneca uses all the arguments given to Areius in his own work elsewhere, and secondly that the phrase "*ut opinor*" gives us a clue that Seneca is simply conjuring up what Areus might have said. Grollios' first argument is true in itself, but not conclusive for the point in

question since Seneca who makes free use of traditional consolatory material might have derived his own arguments from Augustus' domestic philosopher. However, his arguments on the basis of "*ut opinor*" are more weighty. "This, I suppose, was his approach to her." K. Abel (*Bauformen* pp. 17-18) has a similar interpretation of "*ut opinor*", and also lays stress on the fact that Areus could not in 9 B.C. have addressed Livia as Iulia (see *infra*) since she was only adopted into the Julian gens in 14 A.D. after her husband's death. We can also notice that in attempting to prove to his mother that exile is not an evil, Seneca puts an imaginary self-exhortation into the mouth of the exile Marcellus (*Ad Helv.* 9, 7-8). Seneca is in fact extremely fond of the rhetorical device of προσωποποιία which occurs twice subsequently in this work (17.6 and 26, 1), once in the *Ad Polybium* (14.2ff.), three times in the *De Constantia Sapientis* (6.3; 13, 4 and 16, 4) and no less than four times in the comparatively short *De Providentia.* Moreover it was not the custom of Roman writers to produce pale replicas of speeches still extant. For example there is no speech attributed to Cicero in Sallust's *Catiline,* and Livy refuses to attempt a version of Cato's *pro Rhodiensibus* (Livy, XLV, 25, "*Non inseram simulacrum viri copiosi, quae dixerit referendo: ipsius oratio scripta extat, Originum quinto libro inclusa.*" and R. Syme, *Sallust,* Berkeley 1964, pp. 105-6.) The evidence strongly suggests that we are here dealing with something Seneca has devised to suit his own artistic purposes.

Structurally this 'consolatio within a consolatio' falls into three parts, the '*captatio benevolentiae*' (4, 3-4), the Epicurean argument that one should allow the joys of the past to compensate for present misfortunes (5, 1-4) and the *peroratio* urging Livia to bear bravely (5, 5-6).

Iulia

Most modern editors follow A and adopt the reading Iulia. However, because Livia only acquired the name after her husband's death (Tac. *Ann.* 1, 8) and its use in Areus' mouth is anachronistic, a number of scholars, most recently Favez (*op. cit.* p. 16) preferred the reading of the γ tradition, Livia. Paleographically, whatever Seneca wrote, a corruption is easy to understand as in many scripts Iulia and Livia with their series of vertical letters would be virtually indistinguishable. Abel (*loc. cit.*) argues for Iulia by demonstrating that Seneca is quite capable of chronological inaccuracy, as in *De Beat. Vit.* 27, 5 where Socrates is made to complain of the unfair charges brought against Aristotle and Epicurus. His argument that Seneca uses Livia's later style to ensure that her example carries greater weight with Marcia is however, less certain.

dedisti operam ne quid esset quod in te quisquam reprehenderet

Livia is reminded here and in the subsequent section of her high position in society and the sort of behaviour expected of her by the public. This argument was current in consolationes in Cicero's time and he himself both gives this advice to Titius (*Ad Fam.* V, 16) and receives it from Sulpicius (*Ad Fam.* IV, 5, 5ff. "*Denique noli te oblivisci Ciceronem esse et eum qui...*"). According to Jerome (*Ep.* 60, 14) this consolatory theme can be traced back to the writings of Ennius. Seneca uses this argument to Polybius (*Ad Polyb.* 5, 4-5; 6, 1-3) and it is found also in the anonymous *Consolatio ad Liviam* (345-356). Abel (*op. cit.* p. 31) has pointed out that in strictly Stoic terms such an argument would carry no weight, for the philosopher's claim, as Seneca puts it, is "*Nihil opinionis causa, omnia con scientiae faciam* (*De Beat. Vit.* 20, 4); Seneca however uses consolatory arguments according to his judgement of their effectiveness in a particular situation rather than on strictly dogmatic grounds and by putting it under the form of an assumed consolatio to Livia, in form he only applies indirectly to Marcia a somewhat self-regarding argument.

The approach may be connected with Epicurus' advice to his pupils that for a time they should always think some great model of behaviour were watching their own performance (*Ep. Mor.* 11, 8-9; 25, 5) and certainly in the context of the whole consolatio that approach is relevant, for in the closing *prosopopeia* Marcia is urged "*Respice patrem atque avum tuum.*" (26, 3)

4.4 liberrimam

The sense, that rumour is the most unrestrained critic of princes, demands the adoption of Erasmus' paleographically plausible emendation to the A reading '*uberrimam*'. Favez (*op. cit.* p. 17) argues in favour of retaining the manuscript reading, but his proposed translation 'generous' is the exact opposite of what the sense requires. There would be no credit in securing acquittal from a lenient judge, much from the most severe.

in summo fastigio...nullius petere

For a similarly developed contrast between behaviour permitted to others but impermissible to rulers, see *De Clementia* 8, 1-2.

minus

Favez (*op. cit.* p. 18) and Basore (*Seneca's Moral Essays,* Vol. II, Camb. Mass. 1932, p. 19) interpret *minus* as equivalent to *non*.

5.1-4 Seneca here develops the major theme of the 'consolatio Arei', the Epicurean argument that the mind should be turned from the evil to the good, and that pleasant recollection of the past should compensate for

present misfortune, a theme developed and applied to Marcia's situation in 12.2ff. This argument which Cicero describes in the words "*sunt qui abducant a malis ad bona, ut Epicurus*", goes back to Epicurus himself who had argued "θεραπευτέον τὰς συμφορὰς τῇ τῶν ἀπολλυμένων χάριτι καὶ τῷ γινώσκειν ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν ἄπρακτον ποιῆσαι τὸ γεγονός" (*Sent. Vat.* 55) and "ἡδὺ ἡ φίλου μνήμη τεθνηκότος" (*Incert. Epist. Frag.* 50) and is found helpful by Seneca in a number of consolatory contexts (*Ad Polyb.* 10, 1-6; *De Ben.* III, 4, 1; *Ep. Mor.* 99.5). The forms under which the Epicurean Consolatio appears are discussed in my article "The Consolatory Tradition and Seneca's Attitude to the Emotions", Appendix, G&*R*, 21, 1974, pp. 79-81. In this passage the Epicurean argument is most fully exposed at 5.4 "*Nunc incubuisti tota in alteram partem et oblita meliorum fortunam tuam qua deterior est aspicis.*"

In developing this theme Seneca cleverly works in the *laus mortui*, or praise of the dead which has become a requisite part of consolatory writing (Menander, περὶ παραμυθητικοῦ in Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* III, 413, 10, "συνίσταται ἡ μονῳδία ἐκ τῶν ἐγκωμιαστικῶν") and finds expression in 5.1 "*clarissimi iuvenis*" and 5.2 "*facta eius dictaque quanto meruit suspectu celebramus*;" The practice of praising the dead in consoling their survivors seems so natural that it is difficult to attribute it to any precise source. We may note however that Greek epitaphs as early as the 6th century B.C. included reference to the virtues of the deceased (Klaffenbach, Epigraphische Reise durch Griechenland und die Ionischen Inseln, *S.B.A.*, 702) and that this practice had been fully developed at Rome by the time of the *Elogia Scipionum* (Buecheler, *C.E.L.*, 6, 7, 8, 9). The Roman custom of the *laudatio funebris* at which a son or relative pronounced from the rostra before the people on the virtues of a deceased noble may also have influenced Roman authors of consolationes (on the *laudatio funebris*, see Polybius, 6, 53-54).

Seneca finds these two concepts work very well in partnership, for both in his direct advice to Marcia (12, 2-3) and at the conclusion of his consolation to Polybius (*Ad Polyb.* 18, 7-8) he joins the thought of making memories pleasant to discourse on the virtues or prospective virtues of the deceased.

5.4 non ad pueriles dulcesque blanditias non ad incrementa studiorum

Among the encomiastic topics suggested by Menander (Spengel, *op. cit.* 413, 11) we find ἀνατροφή and παιδεία.

5.5 ne gubernatoris quidem artem tranquillum mare et obsequens ventus ostendit

The metaphor is expanded in 6.3 where the implied virtue of holding on however great the storms is made explicit. Plato (*Republic* 488 D and E) compared the lot of the philosopher in a squabbling community to that of a helmsman amongst a mutinous crew, and Stoic philosophy early seized upon the metaphor of the wise man as a helmsman steering his bark, i.e. his person, through life. Ariston of Chios (Stobaeus *Ecl.* II, 31, 95) writes 'κυβερνήτης μὲν οὔτε ἐν μεγάλῳ πλοιῷ οὔτε ἐν μικρῷ ναυτιάσει, οἱ δὲ ἄπειροι ἐν ἀμφοῖν· οὕτως ὁ μὲν πεπαιδευμένος καὶ ἐν πλούτῳ καὶ ἐν πενίᾳ οὐ ταράττεται ὁ δ' ἀπαίδευτος ἐν ἀμφοῖν.' Metaphors of the sea, including this one, are not infrequent in Seneca. For a full list see D. Steyns, *Étude sur les métaphores et les comparaisons dans les œuvres en prose de Sénèque le philosophe,* Gand, 1906, pp. 70ff. Although the comparison should strictly apply only to the sapiens, Seneca feels it might justly be applied to one like Bassus who is facing adversity in the proper manner (*Ep. Mor.* 30, 3) and Marcia is no doubt encouraged not as a sapiens but as one who performs the duties virtue requires. It is not Stoic advice that the rough seas of life be sought (*Ep. Mor.* 14, 7-8) but when they occur virtue prescribes appropriate ways of handling them. However Seneca is perfectly aware that the analogy of the κυβερνήτης, though vivid and often helpful, is like all analogy, abused if pressed too far. For steering, like many other skills, is busied "*circa instrumenta vitae,...non circa totam vitam*" (*Ep. Mor.* 95, 8). For the same emphasis on difference see *Ep. Mor.* 85, 32. The theme was very popular amongst the diatribists and was commonly used both in philosophic literature and Satire, cf. Cic., *Sen.* 71.

adversi aliquid incurrat oportet, quod animum probet

To the Stoic, *adversa* were technically indifferent provided they bore no relationship to virtue, and were therefore not to be feared. The later Stoics developed this doctrine by assigning positive value to adversity both in training the seeker after virtue, and in enabling him to prove to the world his possession of it. Seneca asserts this doctrine most strongly in the *De Providentia* where he argues at 2.6 '*Patrium deus habet adversus bonos viros animum et illos fortiter amat et "operibus" inquit, "doloribus, damnis exagitentur ut verum colligant robur"* ' and at 4.3 '*Item dicere et bono viro possum, si illi nullam occasionem difficilior casus dedit in qua una vim animi sui ostenderet: "Miserum te iudico quod numquam fuisti miser. Transisti sine adversario vitam; nemo sciet quid potueris, ne tu quidem ipse.*"' Similar attitudes to adversity are found in Epictetus (I, 24, 1-2 Αἱ περιστάσεις εἰσὶν αἱ τοὺς ἄνδρας δεικνύουσαι. λοιπὸν

ὅταν ἐμπέσῃ περίστασις, μέμνησο ὅτι ὁ θεός σε ὡς ἀλείπτης τραχεῖ νεανίσκῳ συμβέβληκεν. — Ἵνα τί; φησίν. — Ἵνα Ὀλυμπιονίκης γένῃ.) and Marcus Aurelius (X, 33, 4 "...καὶ κρείττων γίνεται ὁ ἄνθρωπος καὶ ἐπαινετώτερος, ὀρθῶς χρώμενος τοῖς προσπίπτουσιν.)

5.6 ostendit illi filium incolumem, ostendit ex amisso nepotes

Seneca follows exactly this practice with Marcia whom he bids seek consolation in her two surviving daughters and her grand-daughters by Metilius (16, 7; 16, 9). In the case of Livia, *filium* of course refers to Tiberius, and *ex amisso nepotes* to Drusus' two sons, Germanicus and Claudius, and his daughter Livia.

6 At this point Seneca leaves the *exempla* and turns towards *praecepta*, reasons why Marcia should put aside her grief. Dr Grollios (*op. cit.* p. 16) divides the structure of the remainder of the work into three major sections as follows: chapters 6-11, general precepts; chapters 12-19.3, precepts relating to Marcia's situation; chapters 19.3-25, consideration of Metilius' condition. D.N.G. Reid (*op. cit.*) is probably more accurate in regarding chapter 6 which deals with the Stoic commonplace on the immutability of fate as a link section between *exempla* and *praecepta*. The remainder of the general precepts then fell naturally into two halves; chapters 7-8, the Peripatetic view that while some display of emotion is permissible it must be kept within bounds, leading into Chrysippus' argument that false '*opinio*' has led Marcia to see her situation from a false perspective; chapters 9-11, the Cyrenaic argument that prior consideration of all possible misfortunes forestalls much of their power, incorporated into a *locus communis* '*de condicione humana.*'

To understand the place of the various precepts, and the occasional semblance of inconsistency with other parts of Seneca's work, it will be necessary to consider both Seneca's aims in his philosophical works, and the nature of the consolatory genre as such. Mlle A. Guillemin (*R.E.L.* XXX, 202ff; XXXI, 215ff; XXXII 250ff) and Professor M.P. Grimal (*I.L.* X, 197-204) have emphasised Seneca's aim of conversion of the recipients of his treatises. "Sénèque qui ne pense qu'à l'avancement des *proficientes* dans la voie étroite ou la Providence leur a mesuré la durée d'une courte vie dont pas un instant ne doit être perdu pour le progrès moral." (A. Guillemin, *R.E.L.* XXXII, pp.252). In support of this thesis, one may instance the close attention to Paulinus' position and responsibilities as *praefectus annonae* in the *De Brevitate Vitae,* or in the *Epistulae ad Lucilium* the preponderance of Epicurean flosculi in the early letters to encourage Lucilius to see how close Epicurean ethics came to those of the Stoics, or

the advice not to think about the future (*Ep. Mor.* 13, 10-12) but his adoption of the opposite Cyrenaic position (*Ep. Mor.* 24, 1-2) that all future possibilities should be considered and their evil thereby diminished. His technique resembles that of St. Paul feeding his converts "milk" until they are mature enough for stronger food (1 *Cor.* 3 vv. 1-3). One should therefore regard the *praecepta* not as necessarily corresponding wholly to the opinions of Seneca himself but such as might prove helpful in producing more healthy attitudes and behaviour in Marcia. This was a technique already established as suitable for writers in the consolatory genre. Cicero, having listed the various consolationes offered by the philosophic schools and individual teachers, adds "*Sunt etiam qui haec omnia genera consolandi colligant, alius enim alio modo movetur, ut fere nos in Consolatione omnia in consolationem unam coniecimus*" (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 31, 75-6). Seneca himself (*Ep. Mor.* 64, 8) claims originality only in his application and arrangement of theories previously propounded, but, drawing a comparison with diseases of the eye, suggests that the diagnosis of the exact condition is a matter of considerable skill. "*Animi remedia inventa sunt ab antiquis; quomodo autem admoveantur aut quando nostri operis est quaerere.*"

6.1 Muta personam, te consolatus est

A line strongly reminiscent of Horace's famous

mutato nomine de te
fabula narratur
(*Satires* I, 1, 69-70)

Yet although it is tempting to look for a common source for these remarks, perhaps in Bionian diatribe which exercised its influence on the development both of satire and of the philosophic treatise, such conjecture is fraught with danger, particularly when Seneca's knowledge of Roman literature is so profound that direct imitation or subconscious reminiscence are equally probable.

si fletibus fata vincuntur, conferamus

Seneca makes exactly the same offer to Polybius (*Ad Polybium* 2, 1) where the movement of the argument follows the same course as here. "*Nam si quicquam tristitia profecturi sumus, non recuso quicquid lacrimarum fortunae meae superfuit tuae fundere...conqueramur atque adeo ipse hanc litem meam faciam.*" But after a lengthy enumeration of possible complaints he concludes that they are useless. "*Diutius accusare fata possumus, mutare non possumus. Stant dura et inexorabilia. Nemo illa convicio,...nemo causa movet; nihil umquam ulli parcunt nec remittunt.*"

6.2 si sors immota et in aeternum fixa nulla miseria mutatur

The indicative mood of the verb is significant; the condition is fulfilled. It is of course true that by this time the immutability of fate had become a literary commonplace (Vergil, *Aeneid* VI, 376 "*desine fata deum flecti sperare precando*"; Propertius, *Elegies* IV, 11, 3-4

cum semel infernas intrarunt funera leges
non exorato stant adamante viae.)

It is however particularly appropriate for a Stoic, as the immutability of fate was a central dogma of Stoicism throughout the history of the school. Diogenes Laertius (VII, 149) tells us "that all things happen by fate" (καθ' εἱμαρμένην τὰ πάντα γίγνεσθαι) is maintained by Chrysippus in his treatise *De Fato,* by Posidonius in his *De Fato* book 2, by Zeno and by Boëthus in his *De Fato* book 1. Fate is defined as an endless chain of causation whereby things are, or as the reason and formula by which the world goes on. The Stoics defined nature as a creative fire holding all things in its embrace and foreseeing all that was advantageous and most suitable. It contained within it all the seeds of future development, "*Atque ut ceterae naturae suis seminibus quaeque gignuntur augescunt continentur, sic natura mundi omnes motus habet voluntarios conatusque et adpetitiones quas* ὁρμάς *Graeci vocant, et his consentaneas actiones sic adhibet ut nosmet ipsi qui animis movemur et sensibus.*" The threefold purpose of this divine fire, mind of the world, and providence was "*primum ut mundus quam aptissimus sit ad permanendum, deinde ut nulla re egeat, maxime autem ut in eo eximia pulchritudo sit atque omnis ornatus.*" (Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* II 22, 58). Because it embraced all things, it foresaw all that was necessary for these purposes, and was fixed forever from the beginning, not permitting of change. Hence Servius says on Vergil's lines "*parce metu Cytherea; manent immota tuorum/fata tibi*" (*Aen.* I. 256-7); "*dogma Stoicorum ostendit, nulla ratione posse fata mutari.*" For further Stoic statements on this point cf. Chrysippus (in Cicero *De Fato* X, 21) "*omnia quae fiunt causis fiunt antegressis; id si ita est, fato omnia fiunt;*" and *De Fato XV*, 33 and Seneca, *Ep. Mor.* 77, 12 "*series invicta et nulla mutabilis ope inligavit ac trahit cuncta*". In view of all this the sensible man will give up useless grief, "*desinat dolor*" (here, and also *Ad Polybium* 4, 1, *Ep. Mor.* 99, 6) and accept what comes. For things do not just happen, they are decreed, and that by a mind working for the good of the whole. Therefore it is not just grudging obedience but willing assent that the wise man will give to the universal order; "*non pareo deo sed adsentior; ex animo illum, non quia necesse est, sequor*" (*Ep. Mor.* 96, 2). Seneca's feelings are perhaps best expressed in his translation of Cleanthes' poem:

Duc, o parens celsique dominator poli
quocumque placuit: nulla parendi mora est.
adsum impiger. Fac nolle comitabor gemens
malusque patiar facere quod licuit bono,
Ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt.

(*Ep. Mor.* 107, 11)

6.3 Turpis est navigii rector

See note on 5.5 "*ne gubernatoris quidem*".

7.1 At enim naturale desiderium suorum est

Seneca here anticipates the possible objection of Marcia, a technique which probably owes more to the rhetorician's skill than any attempt to retain any impression of dialogue form. Quintilian in describing orators' techniques of enlivening speeches says "*Est et incertae personae ficta oratio, hic aliquis, et, dicat aliquis*" (*Inst. Or.* IX, 2, 37). This practice is extremely common in Seneca (seven more times in the *Ad Marciam*) and the objection is sometimes introduced by *inquit, dicit,* or the impersonal second person. Though its frequent use in Roman satire would naturally lead us to see in the Bionean diatribe a common source for the philosophic and satiric usage, P. Lejay (*Q. Horati Flacci Satirae,* Paris 1911) points out that the practice of carrying on a discussion with the reader and imagining his objections and his point of view is common in antiquity, "Nous écrivons dans le silence pour être lus dans le silence. Toute la littérature ancienne est faite pour être parlée." (pp. XXVI). For a further discussion of this technique, cf. C.C. Grollios, *op. cit.* pp. 44-45.

Quandiu modicum est

The doctrine of the mean as far as the emotions were concerned is particularly associated with the peripatetic school. "*Peripateticorum ratio et oratio qui perturbari animos necesse dicunt esse, sed adhibent modum quendam quem ultra progredi non oporteat*" (*Tusc. Disp.* IV, 17, 38, see also *Tusc. Disp.* III, 10, 22). But though the hallmark of Aristotle's followers, the doctrine was also held by followers of the Old Academy, and was used by Crantor, the founder of the consolatory tradition in his work "*De Luctu*". Like the Peripatetics they maintained that the emotions were given to man for their utility both for the individual and society (Cicero, *Academica* II, 44, 135). The origin of the idea can be traced to Plato (*Republic* 603E-604A) who argues, or rather allows Socrates to get the answer, that the good man will bear misfortune more equably than other people, not because he will feel no grief, but because he will moderate his sorrows. For my interpretation

of Seneca's attitude to the mean, see my note on *omnia vitia* (1.7). I would cite as further evidence of Seneca's usual view of tears as a bodily function *Ep. Mor.* 99, 15-18, another, if harsher, consolatory epistle, "*quaedam sunt sui iuris, excidunt etiam retinentibus lacrimae et animum profusae levant*", "*spiritus ictu doloris impulsus, quemadmodum totum corpus quatit, ita oculos quibus adiacentem umorem perpremit et expellit*". Further evidence of Seneca's rejection of the mean may be seen in *Ep. Mor.* 116, 1-3, 6-7, "*Ego non video quo modo salubris esse aut utilis possit ulla mediocritas morbi*"; and also *Ep. Mor.* 85, 3-13.

animorum contractio

Although the basic argument at this point is peripatetic, the terminology is Stoic. The Stoics believed that the emotion of grief was produced by a physical contraction of the soul, the Greek phrase is συστολὴ ψυχῆς for which the Latin equivalent is *animi contractio* (*S. V.F.* III, 386, 393-94, 412). In the peripatetic view such a reaction to loss would be perfectly natural, although the Stoics would not permit this to their sapiens.

Sed plus est quod opinio adicit quam quod natura imperavit

The Stoics, and in particular Chrysippus, were adamant that *opinio,* the assent of the mind to a false proposition, grossly exaggerated both a man's inner feelings of and outward display of grief, "*sed omnes perturbationes iudicio censent* (sc. Stoici) *fieri et opinione*", (*Tusc. Disp.* IV, 7, 14). For them, at the most general level the false opinion which has led Marcia astray is that something technically indifferent, in this case bereavement (*S. V.F.* III, 117), is an evil (*S. V.F.* III, 385-7). However the *opinio* herein referred to could be one of the following, or a combination of them all; that one felt oneself under the weight of some great and pressing evil; that one considered it a duty to the deceased to take hardly what has happened (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 25, 61-26, 63, and also III, 31, 76); that one will appease the gods more quickly if one appears flattened by their blows (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 29, 72); Chrysippus was particularly associated with the discovery of the harmful effects of the first two. A study of parallel passages in Seneca suggests that his chief concern is with the first, "*Illud praesta mihi...ut te ipse interroges... 'est aliquid istic mali an res ista magis infamis est quam mala?'*" "*Circumspice ista quae cum plurimis lacrimis amittimus; scies non damnum in iis molestum esse sed opinionem damni. Nemo illa perisse sentit sed cogitat.*" "*Ad opinionem dolemus. Tam miser est quisque quam credidit*" (*Ep. Mor.* 13, 6; 42, 10; 78, 14).

7.2 Aspice mutorum animalium quam concitata sint desideria

As Dr. Grollios points out (*op. cit.* p. 36) this passage has no exact parallel in extant Latin texts. However it appears an appropriate argument for a peripatetic standpoint, when one considers the extensive observation and consideration of animal behaviour by Aristotle and his successors. Aristotle wrote a *Historia Animalium,* and Diogenes Laertius includes amongst Theophrastus' works both an epitome in six books of Aristotle's work on animals, seven books of his own on animals, and in addition a series of single volumes on animals which display various characteristics, e.g. which change colours, which burrow, which reproduce spontaneously (D.L. V, 43-49). The idea that animals can provide an example for men can perhaps be traced back to Hesiod, who uses the fable of the hawk and nightingale as a lesson for princes (*W.D.* 202-12) and enters philosophic literature with the assertion of Plato's Socrates that the song of the dying swan is a joy-song, arising from the knowledge of the good things which await it in the world to come (*Phaedo* 85Aff.). The idea that the behaviour of animals can provide a model for that of man is also common in the popular philosophy of the cynics and in Bionean diatribe. Dio Chrysostom puts into the mouth of Diogenes the statement that the life of beasts is better than that of men, (Dio Chr. *Or* 6, 21-22 and Oltramare, *Les Origines de la diatribe Romaine,* Lausanne, 1926, p. 49, th. 30a). In this form it is widely found in Latin Literature, making its first appearance in Plautus (*Truc.* 867-70) where the foresight of the mouse is used as an example of what is appropriate in man. As we should expect of a Bionean theme it appears in satire, (Horace *Sat.* 1, 1, 32-5; *Epod.* 7, 11-12) but also makes a direct appearance in philosophic literature (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* V, 27, 79; *ibid.* V, 34, 98) and in the debates of the rhetorical schools, where it was used by Seneca's mentor Papirius Fabianus amongst others (Sen., *Contr.* II, 1, 10). Stoic moralists found it convenient to draw a contrast between the sensible behaviour of beasts and the vices which humans often displayed. Thus Seneca compares man's gluttony with animals who know when they have satisfied their hunger (*Ep. Mor.* 59, 13), man's fastidious eating habits with animals who are content with what nature offers (*Ep. Mor.* 60, 2-3). Most often however Seneca contrasts the propensity of the human race for bloodshed with the characteristic behaviour of beasts who generally do not attack their own kind, (*Ep. Mor.* 95, 31; *De Ira* II, 8.3; *De Clementia* I, 26, 3-4), do not attack unless under pressure, (*Ep. Mor.* 103, 2; *N.Q.* 5, 18, 9) and can ignore the insults or attacks of lesser creatures (*De Ira* II, 32, 3; III, 25, 3). But for the Stoics imitation of animals was a precept limited in its application, as Seneca also

makes clear. For the human animal has kinship not only with other animals but also with the divine, by virtue of its reasoning capacity. This reasoning capacity animals lack and therefore they are also without that absolute perfection which the gods have and man can achieve, "*Erit aliquod bonum in muto animali, erit aliqua virtus, erit aliquid perfectum, sed nec bonum absolute nec virtus nec perfectum*", (*Ep. Mor.* 124, 20. For another example of animal behaviour falling short of human, *Ep. Mor.* 99, 24.) They have natural instincts which drive them to the advantageous and away from the harmful, but these are basically bodily reactions (*Ep. Mor.* 121, 19-21). Though these have a resemblance to human dispositions, they are only traces; the animals are deprived both of human virtue and human vice. If their guiding spirit has any point of comparison with that of human beings, it is only in that their impulses bear the same relationship to human reason and emotions as their unintelligible utterances bear to human speech. (*De Ira* 1, 3, 6-8). In short Seneca basically believed he had done a great service if, as he said to Lucilius "*te a mutis animalibus separo...cum deo pono.*" (*Ep. Mor.* 124, 21). We may assign Seneca's injunction here, either to the influence of the peripatetic view he is putting forward, or to the therapeutic effect of the argument on Marcia, and should be wary of drawing too many conclusions about Seneca's own attitude to the animal kingdom.

7.3 magis feminas quam viros

Though, as we have seen (1.1) Seneca himself was inclined to postulate female inclination to particular faults, including grief, the placing of women in an inferior category can probably be explained by the peripatetic source for the argument. Aristotle had justified the inferior position of women in the society of his day by postulating a physiological inferiority of the female sex. He writes "For females are weaker and colder in nature, and we must look upon the female character as being a sort of natural deficiency. Accordingly, while it is within the mother, it develops slowly because of its coldness; but after birth it quickly arrives at maturity and old age on account of its weakness for all inferior things come sooner to their perfection or end." (*De Generatione Animalium* 775a).

Apparet non esse naturale quod varium est

Although the position here being maintained is peripatetic, the argument used in defence of it at this point is a sort of inversion of the Stoic doctrine of general consent. The Stoics believed that the human soul was a part of the divine force of the world, broken off from the whole, and though its purity of vision and insight was impaired by its contact with the

body, it possessed some traces of its divine powers. If there was a consensus of opinion amongst all men, this was taken to be evidence of the survival, even if in an imperfect state, of knowledge formerly possessed. The first use of this argument is found in Plato where one of the arguments for the existence of the gods is "ὅτι πάντες Ἕλληνές τε καὶ βάρβαροι νομίζουσι εἶναι θεούς" that all the Greeks and barbarians believe in the existence of the gods (*Laws,* 886a). The Stoics made particular use of this argument in asserting the existence of the gods and the survival of the soul. Hence Cicero makes the Stoic Balbus argue that the growth and persistence of belief in the gods proves that we have in our minds a firmly grasped conception of them, (*De Natura Deorum,* II, 2, 4). In the Tusculans he asserts that we believe in the existence of the gods because although many have corrupt opinions about the gods, no nation is so uncivilised that it has no conception of god at all, and states as a general principle "*omni autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex naturae putanda est,*" (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 13, 30). He proceeds to argue in like manner "*permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium*" (*ibid.* I, 16, 36). Seneca, writing to Lucilius, follows this argument in exactly the same terms, "*Multum dare solemus praesumptioni omnium hominum, et apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus videri; tamquam deos esse inter alia hoc colligimus, quod omnibus insita de dis opinio est nec ulla gens usquam est adeo extra leges moresque proiecta ut non aliquos deos credat. Cum de animarum aeternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos aut colentium,* (*Ep. Mor.* 117, 6). Here and in the succeeding examples the argument seems to be that if bereavement has no generally agreed effect then the lack of consensus suggests our reaction is due to our opinion of its effects rather than the reality. This is not, of course, a necessary corollary, for the Stoics held many views as proven which were certainly not based on "*consensus omnium*". Nevertheless, when Seneca wishes to assert that self-preservation is a natural instinct in animals, not something taught by experience, he draws the same contrast of the general as natural, the particular as the product of some acquired skill or opinion or the like, "*Et tardum est et varium quod usus docet: quidquid natura tradit et aequale omnibus est et statim...Incertum est et inaequabile quidquid ars tradit: ex aequo venit quod natura distribuit.* (*Ep. Mor.* 121, 20, 23).

8.1 Deinde quod naturale est non decrescit mora

The argument here is that the validity of an 'opinio' is vouched for by its continuity, and that the converse holds true, that its instability proves it invalid. The passage may perhaps be compared to Balbus' argument in the *De Natura Deorum* (II, 5) where he contrasts the persistence of the belief

that the gods exist with the temporary and passing character of belief in Chimaeras and the like. The general principle enunciated is "*opinionis enim commenta delet dies, naturae iudicia confirmat.*" This principle is probably a corollary of the Stoic view of how knowledge is acquired. The Stoic criterion of knowledge was the καταληπτικὴ φαντασία, a gripping presentation. This presentation came from its source in such a form that it could not come from an unreal source, (Cicero, *Academica* II, 6, 15). Its grasp on the mind was such that it produced complete conviction, in such a way as could not be avoided, and its impression was abiding "*quam nos non comprehensionem modo rerum, sed eam stabilem quoque et immutabilem esse censemus*" (Cicero, *Academica,* II, 8, 23). If a conviction or belief was such as this, it would create an unchanging impression, and hence it is logical to argue that a change in the conviction produced that one's lot was evil (even if only a change in degree) was sufficient proof that it had not arisen from the realities of the situation.

Dolorem dies longa consumit

The Classical bibliography of time the healer was collected by E. T. Merrill in his edition of *Selected Letters on the Younger Pliny* (London, 1903) pp. 327, ad V, 16, 10. Its first use by Menander "πάντων ἰατρὸς τῶν ἀναγκαίων κακῶν χρόνος ἐστιν" (*Frag.* 677, Kock), is interesting in that it suggests that the idea was part of the intellectual background against which the Hellenistic philosophies grew up. By the time Terence introduced it into Latin (*Heauton Timorumenos* 420-2) it had become a commonplace "*quod volgo audio dici*", and its frequent usage in consolatory contexts in the correspondence and philosophic works both of Cicero and Seneca, and in the poetry of Horace (e.g. *Od.* I, 24, 19-20) suggests that it was widely felt to be true. The passion for which time is considered so effective a medicine is most often *aegritudo,* the judgement that present circumstances are evil, though the particular circumstances include not only bereavement but exile, and even the return of a jealous husband, or desertion by a girlfriend (Ovid, *Remedia Amoris* 127-134), though it is worth noting that in this context express comparison is made with the situation of the mother who has recently lost her child. Some of those who used it, like Terence's Menedemus, found it difficult to apply to their own situation. Cicero writes to Atticus (III, 15, 2) on his exile "*Nam ceteri dolores mitigantur vetustate, hic non potest non et sensu praesentis miseriae et recordatione praeteritae vitae cottidie augeri*". But though one of the characters in Seneca's drama (Atreus in *Thyestes* 306-7) calls the maxim into question, falsely, as it happens, there can be no doubt that Seneca felt it to be true and useful. He writes to

Lucilius (*Ep. Mor.* 63, 12), "*Scio pertritum iam hoc esse quod adiecturus sum, non ideo tamen praetermittam quia ab omnibus dictum est: finem dolendi etiam qui consilio non fecerat, tempore invenit*". The argument is also applied by Seneca to the emotion of anger (*De Ira* III, 27, 5), which was in the Stoic view a category of *libido* (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* IV, 21, "*ira sit libido poeniendi eius qui videatur laesisse iniuria*".)

8.3 finem luctus potius facere quam expectare

The argument is that if grief is irrational and will be removed by time in any case, it is more sensible to allow reason to do immediately what would be done by time over a longer period, (cf. *Ad Polyb.* 4, 2 "*Nam lacrimis nostris nisi ratio finem fecerit, fortuna non faciet.*") A similar argument is applied to anger (*De Ira* III, 27, 4 "*quanto satius est iram relinquere quam ab ira relinqui*". Cicero uses a similar argument in writing to Atticus (*Ad Att.* XII, 10 "*impetret ratio quod dies impetratura est.*")

9 The following three chapters whose philosophic base is the Cyrenaic '*praemeditatio futuri mali*', on which see note infra, form a locus on the power of fortune over human life. K. Abel, (*Bauformen* pp. 38-9) has analysed the three chapters as follows.

1) ch. 9 General considerations of the power of fortune
2) ch. 10 the power of fortune over externals
3) ch. 11 the power of fortune over the human body.

The passage from 10.5-11.2 which deals with the death of Marcia's son forms a transition between these last two sections, being introduced amongst the things external to Marcia and subject to fate, but leading naturally to the thought that the human body is itself frail and subject to fortune's blows. Underlying the whole passage is the traditional division of goods into three categories, those of the soul, those of the body, and external goods, alluded to by Plato (*Gorgias* 477B), and associated by the Romans with the Peripatetics and the old Academy (Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* V, 85). The Stoic view was that the name of good, τὸ ἀγαθόν or 'bonum', should only be applied to the first of these categories, that of the soul, and consisted entirely in virtue or honourable behaviour (*S.V.F.* I, 185-189; III, 49-51). Seneca can thus consistently urge Marcia to think of the worst fortune can do to her person and to things external to her, for it cannot touch her real good, nor as he subsequently argues (ch. 24, 5-25) that of her son. For a clear statement of Seneca's views on a man's true good, see *Ep. Mor.* 41, 8; 76, 8-19. Though the imagery of much of this section has its origin in the popular preaching of the Cynics (see notes on 9.3, 10, 1-2, and 11, 3) the basis of the argument is perfectly orthodox Stoicism.

9.1 Quod nihil nobis mali, antequam eveniat, proponimus

Marcia's imagined interjection that the examples of stubborn 'aegritudo' suggest that it is natural enables Seneca to pass to the Cyrenaic argument that misfortune falls more harshly upon men because of their unwillingness to anticipate it. Initially it was associated with the Cyrenaic school, *Cyrenaici non omni malo aegritudinem effici censent sed insperato et necopinato malo* (Tusc. Disp. III, 28; cf. *ibid.* III, 52; III, 76). But at least in a slightly less bald form it was adopted by the Stoics who from the time of Chrysippus maintained that foreseen evils at least strike more lightly (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 52). Criticized by the Epicureans who maintained that the man who constantly thought of misfortune, even that which might never come to pass, would be constantly miserable, the Cyrenaic position was defended by Cicero and remained an integral part of the consolatory tradition (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 15, 32-16, 34). The attitude of Carneades, as befitted a Sceptic, remained enigmatic, or rather he saw that arguments could be advanced on both sides. Plutarch recalls his warning that great possessions could all be unexpected sources of trouble (*De Tranq. Anim.* 474E) but he also realised that if this theory were used only to suggest that all must suffer grief, then one might complain of the whole condition of the universe, and give comfort only to the spiteful and envious (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 25, 59-60). Seneca saw the dangers of overstressing this theory, both from the Epicurean, and from the Academic point of view. Simply to produce instances of bereavements is to insult Marcia "*malivolum solacii genus est turba miserorum*", (*Ad Marc.* 12, 5) and the panicking Lucilius is reminded "*quam multa expectata nusquam conparuerunt!...satis cito dolebis cum venerit,*" (*Ep. Mor.* 13, 10). This is included at this point because Lucilius is not yet advanced enough in the practice of Philosophy to follow the recommendations of the Cyrenaics. However, in all his consolatory writings, Seneca feels their argument helpful and chooses to remain within the tradition (*Ad Polyb.* 11, 1; *Ep. Mor.* 63, 15; 99, 32). Seneca's 98th letter presents us with a more difficult problem. Dr. Grollios has cited the passage "*Certe in tranquillo non tumultuatur. Nihil est nec miserius nec stultius quam praetimere. Quae ista dementia est malum suum antecedere? Denique, ut breviter includam quod sentio et istos satagios ac sibi molestos describam tibi, tam intemperantes in ipsis miseriis sunt quam ante illas. Plus dolet quam necesse est qui ante dolet quam necesse est.*" (*Ep. Mor.* 98, 7-8). He has suggested (*op. cit.* pp. 50-51) that it shows that Seneca "knew the limits of such an attitude" i.e. the Cyrenaic consolation. Yet much of this letter is concerned with the necessity of anticipating future events "*Sic composito nihil accidet. Sic autem componetur si quid humanarum rerum varietas possit cogitaverit antequam senserit, si et liberos et coniugem et patrimonium sic habuerit*

tamquam non utique semper habiturus et tamquam non futurus ob hoc miserior si habere desierit." (*Ep. Mor.* 98, 5) Seneca is not suggesting that a man should avoid premature emotional stress by blithely ignoring what the future might bring. Rather he should consider the whole nature of human life. It is by realising that he may lose things but by understanding that they are not necessary for his complete well-being that he is to avoid premature fear, "*Errant enim, Lucili, qui aut boni aliquid nobis aut mali iudicant tribuere fortunam... Valentior enim omni fortuna animus est et in utramque partem ipse res suas ducit beataeque ac miserae vitae sibi causa est.* (*ibid.* 98, 2). Letter 98 is not to be taken as evidence that Seneca felt unsure of the value of the Cyrenaic position. (For further discussion of this point see my article in *Mnemosyne,* 29, 1976, pp. 301-4.)

9.2 Tot praeter domum nostram ducuntur exsequiae

Cf. *Ad Polyb.* 11, 1 "*Cotidie praeter oculos nostros transeunt notorum ignotorumque funera*"; also *De Tranq. Animi* 11, 7. For a full account of Roman funerary practice, see J. M. C. Toynbee, *Death and burial in the Roman World,* London, 1974, pp. 43-64. We may notice that the actual funeral procession was a public and inescapable feature of Roman life, so that Seneca could reasonably expect his readers to have noticed their frequency. All bodies had to be cremated outside the city (Cic., *De Leg.* II, 23, 58) and so a procession through the streets was necessary, and in historic times such processions took place in daylight. Amongst the well-to-do a certain amount of display was customary on such occasions; a herald summoned mourners and people were hired to play and sing mournful dirges. (Varro, *De Lingua Latina* V, 160; VII, 42; Toynbee, *op. cit.* p. 46-47).

tot acerba funera

In view of what follows we may suspect that Seneca is thinking of the funerals of children, although *acerba* is perhaps best translated 'tragic'; cf. 17.7 "*nullum non acerbum funus est quod parens sequitur.*" Vergil also uses the adjective *acerbus* in referring to the death of the very young in a line which was frequently lifted bodily into epitaphs (*Aen.* VI, 429; see also Lattimore, *Themes in Greek and Latin Epitaphs,* University of Illinois Studies in Language and Literature 1942, p. 187, n. 119).

togam nostrorum infantium

Seneca is here thinking of the *toga virilis,* the pure white toga assumed by the freeborn Roman youth at the age of fourteen or fifteen. The occasion was often marked by some sort of ceremony before the household Lares (Cic., *Ad Att.* IX, 61; Pliny, *Ep.* 1, 9, 2 and Sherwin White *ad loc.*).

9.3 expositum

In developing this commonplace theme 'de condicione humana' (9.1-11) Seneca appears to be thinking of a wider application than simply to Marcia's condition. In the same way as we find a masculine participle here we have *formosa coniux* (10.1), and the plural imperatives, *rapite, date* and *haurite* (10.4). Likewise in the second development of this theme, masculine participles *genitus* (17.1) and *satiatus* (18.4) are used even though the addressee is feminine.

ictus stare...in tuum puta librata corpus

The comparison of life to battle is associated with the popular preaching of the cynics, and certainly military imagery was used by Antisthenes (D.L. VI, 12 & 13, see Oltramare, *op. cit.* p. 56). While the presence of the theme in Satire, and its use by Sextius and the rhetoricians of the first century (Horace, *Sat.* III, 2, 110-111; *Epist.* I, 16, 7-8, Sen., *De Prov.* 3.3; *Ep. Mor.* 59, 7-8) would naturally lead us to look for a source in Bionean diatribe, it had become such a commonplace that it was probably part of Seneca's inherited thought pattern used without thought of its origin, rather like our 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'. As evidence of its wide use we may cite Cicero who when he reminds Titius "*ut omnibus telis fortunae proposita sit vita nostra*" speaks of it as "*consolatio pervulgata*" (*Ad Fam.* 5, 16, 2) and Columella who compares the need for order on a farm with the same need in an army (*De Re Rust.* XII, 2, 5), I would suspect without any thought for its philosophic origin.

Seneca makes frequent use of military imagery, sometimes using only a single word, as with *confligere* (1.5) on other occasions making more extended comparisons (cf. 16.6, 22.3). A full list is contained in D. Steyns, *op. cit.* pp. 22-34. Sometimes the comparisons of life to military service is general (*Ad Marc.* 22, 3; *Ep. Mor.* 96, 5; *Const. Sap.* 3.4; *Tranq. Animi* 3, 5), while sometimes the enemy is named as *voluptas* (*Ep. Mor.* 51, 6) or *vitia* (*Tranq. Animi* 1, 1) but most often as *fortuna* (*Tranq. Animi* 8, 7; 8.9; *De Prov.* 4.4; 4, 8; *Ep. Mor.* 18, 6; 18, 11; 36, 8-9; 51, 8; 64, 4; 71, 37; 82, 5; 98, 14; 113, 27-28; 120, 12). The imagery is frequently linked with the theme of *praemeditatio* where an individual is urged to prepare himself for adverse fortune just as a soldier or an army in peace-time must prepare to face conflict. (*Ep. Mor.* 18.6 "*In ipsa securitate animus ad difficilia se praeparet et contra iniurias fortunae inter beneficia firmetur. Miles in media pace decurrit, sine ullo hoste vallum iacit et supervacuo labore lassatur ut sufficere necessario possit.*" Also *Ep. Mor.* 36, 8-9; *Vit. Beat.* 26, 2). Cato is of course the supreme example of the soldier of virtue matched against adverse fortune (*Prov.* 2, 9).

9.4 tamquam dirum omen respuat et...abire illa iubeat

As Bouché-Leclercq (*op. cit.,* vol. IV, pp. 136-37) makes clear, the power of an ominous event resided not in the event itself, but on the interpretation placed upon it by the recipient. Thus Caesar was able to turn what would usually have been regarded as an unfavourable omen, a fall when disembarking in Africa, into a favourable omen by his remark "*Teneo te, Africa*" (Suet. *Iul.* 59). Servius (*ad Aen.* V, 530) informs us that according to the principles of the augurs the individual could either accept an omen, or as here argue that it had no relevance to himself. (See also A. S. Pease on Cicero, *De Div.* I, 46, 103, Darmstadt, 1963, p. 448.)

9.5 Egregium versum et dignum qui non e pulpito exiret

The verse is that of the writer of mime Publilius Syrus, quoted again with the author named in *De Tranq. Animi* 11, 8-9. Publilius came to Rome from Antioch as a slave, and after beginning to write mimes, he was matched with the Roman knight Laberius at Caesar's victory celebrations. Caesar awarded him the prize, but ancient sources generally attribute this to his hostility to Laberius by whose frankness he had been offended. Laberius died ten months after Caesar and from that period on Publilius was acknowledged as the leading mime-writer in Rome. (Pliny *N.H.* XXXV, 58.199; Cic. *Ad Fam.* XII, 18, 2; Aulus Gellius, *Noct. Att.* XVII, 14, 1-4; Suet. *Frag.* (in Roth 295, 20-23); Macrobius, *Saturnalia* 2, 7, 1ff.).

He was noted for his *sententiae,* or moral aphorisms, which even when devised by others were often known as *Publilianae sententiae* (Sen. *Contr.,* VII, 4, 8) and we cannot therefore be certain how many of the 722 verses which circulate under his name were actually his, but a considerable number are on the theme of fortune (cf. 197-8, 203, 214, 216, 247 in Bickford-Smith's edition). Although Seneca found many features of the contemporary stage trivial (*Ep. Mor.* 88, 22) and the mime was considered the lowest form of theatre (the underlying assumption of *Ep. Mor.* 8, 8-9), he was strongly attracted by the moral force of Publilius' *sententiae,* and while displaying a certain reticence in quoting from a writer of mime, "*Numquam me in voce bona mali pudebit auctoris*", he asserts that the sentiments of Publilius rise to and beyond the level of tragedy (*Tranq. Animi* 11, 8-9; also *Ep. Mor.* 8, 8-9), an opinion shared by rhetorician Cassius Severus and the Elder Seneca (*Contr.* 7, 3, 8).

10.1 exclusorum clientium turba referta vestibula

Seneca here refers to the morning '*salutatio*' which it was customary for Roman clients to offer to their patrons at the beginning of the day (Juv. *Sat.* III, 126-30; Martial *Epig.* IV, 8, 1; XII, 68, 1-2). In the time of the

republic when clients were the basis of a man's political power, clients could render services which, though they might be regarded as politically corrupt, were genuine enough (see Cic., *De Amicitia* 72-3) and might receive genuine favours such as hospitality and the use of a patron's influence. However with the coming of the principate some aspects of the relationship became obsolete and abuses crept in which became the object of criticism by both satirists and philosophic writers. Such abuses included the substitution of a cash hand-out for a genuine meal (Juv., *Sat.* I, 95-126), the organisation of meals in such a way that lesser clients were insulted (Juv., *Sat.* V, esp. 146-155, and Pliny *Epist.* II, 6) and the abuse to which Seneca here alludes, the arrogant behaviour of patrons towards those who come to pay their respects (*Const. Sap.* 10, 2; *Tranq. Animi* 12, 4 and 12, 6; *Brev. Vit.* 14, 3-4; *Ep. Mor.* 4, 10; 84, 12). In the scene depicted here the clients are shut out and crowding the *vestibulum,* that is the empty space between the street and the door of the house (see Aul. Gell., *Noct. Att.* XVI, 5, 3). What Seneca is arguing is that to have this extensive influence over one's fellows is no true good, since it comes from without and is dependent upon chance. Elsewhere he amplifies the thought by adding that clients are not true friends, but only attend a patron's house in the hope of some personal gain (*De Ben.* VI, 33, 4-34, 5; *Ep. Mor.* 19, 4; 19, 11).

formosa coniux

See note on 9, 3 *expositum.*

alieni commodatique apparatus...creditori facere convicium

In an extended analogy with commercial dealings Seneca makes the point that external possessions are not the gifts of fortune but loans, and adds that they are not given for any fixed period, but like money deposited at the bank, can be claimed at the will of the creditor, "*cuius tempus ille arbiter muneris sui temperat*". The idea of external possessions as a loan goes back to Bion, βίων ἔφη τὰ χρήματα τοῖς πλουσίοις ἡ τύχη οὐ δεδώρηται ἀλλὰ δεδάνειχεν (Stob., *Ecl.* V, 56 p. 943-4, Hense). This diatribe material is found both in satire, (Lucilius, 777 in Warmington, *R.O.L.* III, "*cum sciam nihil esse in vita proprium mortali datum*;" see also Horace, *Sat.* II, 2, 129-135) and philosophic literature where life itself is compared to a loan (Lucr., *D.R.N.* III, 971), and the comparison is extended to include the idea that there is no fixed day of repayment. (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* I, 93, "*At ea (sc. natura) quidem dedit usuram vitae...nulla praestituta die.*") By the time Seneca was writing the theme that externals were loans was commonplace (Sen., *Contr.* II, 1, 1; VI, 1; Cic., *Parad. Stoic.* 29) and Seneca makes wide

use of the theme, suggesting in Stoic vein that the *sapiens* will retain his independence of such chance possessions (*Ep. Mor.* 87, 7; 120, 18; *De Tranq. Animi* 11, 1-2). The application of the imagery to life itself quickly permeated the whole of society and is found in epitaphs of the Republican and Augustan periods (Buecheler *C.E.L.* 185; also *C.I.L.* VI, 25617; see Lattimore *op. cit.* pp. 170-171). The argument that a debtor has no right to complain when repayment is demanded is an answer to the complaint found in one epitaph (*C.E.L.* 1001, 3-4)

"*quod quaeritis id repetitum*
abstulit iniustus creditor ante diem."

The argument appears to have been a frequent one with writers of consolation and both Plutarch (*Ad Apollonium* 116a) and Seneca when writing to Polybius (*Ad Polyb.* 10, 4-5) use it in much the same form as here.

scaena adornatur

Comparisons of life to the theatre are common in ancient philosophising literature, usually taking the form that it does not matter what part fortune has called a man to play, whether king or beggar, provided he plays it well (Ariston of Chios in Diog. Laert. VII, 160) or consistently (Sen., *Ep. Mor.* 120, 22; Epictetus, 4, 2, 10), or that it does not matter how long one's part lasts provided one acts well every part assigned (Teles, *Reliquiae* p. 16, 4 Hense, Cicero, *De Sen.* 5; 64; 75; Sen., *Ep. Mor.* 77, 20). An alternative use was that man ought to leave life like a spectator at a theatre when he is bored or dissatisfied (Cicero, *De Fin.* I, 49, *De Sen.* 85). Here Seneca's use is somewhat more original. External possessions are compared to stage props, which assist a performer, but without which his own qualities as an actor will still allow him to play the part required. See also Steyns, *op. cit.* pp. 117-18.

10.3 exempturo auctore

The mss. read *exemplum auctore* or *exemplum ab auctore,* but it is difficult to see what in this context the gifts of fortune would be examples of. Madvig tried the emendation *exempto auctore* with the sense of 'with no guarantor'. *exempto* has to be equivalent to *nullo.* Pichon's conjecture *exempturo auctore* gives the meaning "You must possess whatever fortune has given as if the giver will one day take it away" and is justified by Favez (*op. cit.* p. 30) on the grounds that *recessura* used earlier of the gifts sets the context for their future removal. Although there is no Senecan parallel for an ablative absolute construction with a future participle, the predicative use of the future participle gains considerable ground during and after the Augustan age (L. R. Palmer, *The Latin Language,* London, 1954, pp. 326-7) and

Seneca's work contains a number of uses of the participle in marginal cases (e.g. *Ep. Mor.* 114, 24 "*populus largitione nocitura...plenus*). There is a clear example of a future participle in an ablative absolute in Propertius 4, 11, 69-70, *mihi cumba volenti/solvitur aucturis tot mea fata meis.*

10.4 Rapite, date, haurite

See note on 9.3, *expositum*

Nihil de hodierna nocte,...de hac hora

Literary precedents for this theme are Euripides, *Alcestis* 783-4

"χοὐκ ἔστι θνητῶν ὅστις ἐξεπίσταται
τὴν αὔριον μέλλουσαν εἰ βιώσεται"

and Horace, *Odes* IV, 7, 17-18

"*quis scit an adiciant hodiernae crastina summae*
tempora di superi?"

advocatio is technically the time allowed to an accused to procure legal assistance (Cic. *Ad. Fam.* 7, 11, 1) but also used frequently by Seneca simply to mean delay (*N.Q.* VII, 10, 1; *De Ira* I, 18, 1; III, 12, 4).

10.5 eius temporis quo natus...statim prosequebatur

Seneca turns again to the particular position of Marcia and uses a natural extension of the idea that all men must die (Eur. *Alcestis* 782), namely that all men are destined for death the hour of their birth. This development was also a consolatory commonplace found in Teles (*Reliquiae,* 60, 13-14 Hense) ἀπογέγονεν ὁ φίλος καὶ γὰρ γέγονε and also in Epicurus and Metrodorus (*Sent. Vat.* 30) 'ὡς πᾶσιν ἡμῖν θανάσιμον ἐγκέχυται τὸ τῆς γενέσεως φάρμακον'. The sentiment became widespread and is found in epitaphs in various forms (Buecheler *C.E.L.* 1489 and 1533, see Lier, *Topica Carminum Sepulcralium Latinorum, Philologus* 1903, p. 584). Seneca makes wide use of it, both to urge his correspondents to face the possibility of death themselves with equanimity (*Tranq. Animi* 11, 6; *Ep. Mor.* 4, 9; 120, 14) and encourage them to accept resolutely the loss of those they love (*Ad Polyb.* 11, 3). One of the forms in which Seneca expresses this sentiment (*Ep. Mor.* 99.8 *cui nasci contigit mori restat*) influenced at least one extant epitaph (Buecheler *C.E.L.* 1567, 7 *cui contigit nasci, instat et mori.*

10.6 In regnum fortunae

Seneca uses the same phrase in *De Brevitate Vitae* (10.4) where the past is said to be "*extra regnum fortunae subducta.*" D. N. G. Reid, (*Form and content in Seneca's Moral Essays* p. 132) has suggested that the picture of fortune here is influenced by the stock tyrant figure of the rhetorical schools, suggested by the concluding description of fortune as '*libidinosa... domina.*'

The analogy will hold if not pressed too far, for both Dionysius as subsequently described (17.5) and the tyrant of *Contr.* II, 5, like fortune here, torture, burn and imprison their victims.

The practice of enumerating the sufferings involved in life, which Seneca follows here, was common amongst Hellenistic philosophers and was widely used in consolatory contexts. The Cyrenaic Hegesias in his 'Ἀποκαρτερῶν had written about a would-be suicide who replied to his friends calling him back to life by recounting its disadvantages, while Cicero in his own *Consolatio* had deplored life's ills (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* I, 76; I, 84).

11.1 Tota flebilis vita est

This essentially pessimistic outlook is frequent in popular philosophy and consolatory literature of the Hellenistic philosophers. Teles, following Crates, had argued that disadvantages outweighed advantages "ἀλλ' εἰ θέλει τις ἐκλογίσασθαι ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ βίῳ πάσας τὰς ἡλικίας εὑρήσει πολλῷ πλείους τὰς ἀλγηδόνας" and Crantor had suggested that from the beginning evil was mixed with our lot "ἥ τ' ἄδηλος αὕτη τύχη πόρρωθεν ἡμῖν καὶ ἔτ' ἀπ' ἀρχῆς ἠκολούθηκεν οὐδ' ἐφ'ἑνὶ ὑγιεῖ, φυομένοις τε μίγνυνταί τις ἐν πᾶσι κακοῦ μοῖρα" (Teles, *Reliquiae* p. 49, 4-6 Hense, Crantor in Plutarch, *ad Apoll.* 104C). This teaching spread widely by the time Seneca was writing; Phaedrus for example echoes it in suggesting that the legendary punishment of Sisyphus showed that human wretchedness was never-ending. Seneca employs it on a number of occasions particularly in consolatory contexts (cf. *ad Polyb.* 4.2 "*lacrimae nobis deerunt antequam causae dolendi*". Also *ibid* 9, 6-7; *Ep Mor* 36, 10, and *Thyestes* 596-7.

vobis maxime

vobis is slightly unusual here as Seneca's attention has turned from the general situation to that of Marcia (10.5 *si mortuum tibi filium doles*). But while Seneca is exhorting Marcia to exercise self-control, his attention is probably turned to the larger group of women who have ceased to do so (*Ad Helv.* 16.2). Seneca therefore uses the plural to make the reference more general and the relative clause *quae immoderate fertis* to define the group involved.

Quae deinde ista...mortalesque peperisti

Again Seneca uses a common consolatory argument, found in Teles, where a man grieving for a friend excessively is to be reminded "ὅτι αὐτῷ ὁ φίλος θνητὸς ἐγένετο καὶ ἄνθρωπος" (*Reliquiae* p. 59, 10, Hense). Here the thought is amplified somewhat to suggest that a mortal could not bring

forth an immortal creature. Plutarch uses the argument in exactly this form, where a grieving father must remember "ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπός ἐστι καὶ τὰ τέκνα θνητὰ ἐγέννησεν" (*Ad Apoll.* 116B). Seneca finds the concept of '*oblivio mortalitatis*' useful both in consolatory contexts (*Ad Polyb.* 11, 1) and also in encouraging the immediate adoption of healthy counsels (*Brev. Vit.* 3, 5).

Causis (morbos) repetita

Fickert deleted the impossible *morbos*, arguing that it was a corruption of a gloss *morbis*, and is followed by Favez and Viansino. Gertz followed by Basore emends to *causis morborum*, which is paleographically plausible, *morbos* being a corruption of the abbreviated genitive plural. However, Seneca uses *causa* without any genitive to refer to epilepsy, *comitiale vitium* (*De Ira* III, 10, 3) with the meaning of sickness or perhaps symptoms (see *O.L.D. causa* (13) p. 290) and Celsus uses the phrase *morbi repetunt* to refer to the recurrence of disease (*De Med.* 2, 1; 3, 22). It is perhaps best therefore to follow Fickert and to translate *causis repetita* "repeatedly assailed by diseases".

11.2 decurrit ad hunc...properant

The picture here is of the whole of life as a journey towards death. This is not precisely the conception which Plato commonly uses when he describes death as a journey from this life to another (*Apol.* 40; 41e; *Phaedo* 61e; 67b; 115a) nor that of the writer of the *Axiochus* (365b) who describes life as a sojourn in a foreign place from which it is necessary to depart, though there is a resemblance. The picture is however a commonplace of Roman literature (Horace, *Odes* II, 3, 25 "*omnes eodem cogimur*" and *Consolatio ad Liviam* 359 "*Tendimus huc omnes, metam properamus ad unam*") which Seneca makes good use of. "*tota vita nihil aliud quam ad morten iter est*" (*Ad Polyb.* 11, 2; see also *ibid.* 9.9; 11.4).

hoc omnis

Hoc is used adverbially for *huc,* as in *Aeneid* VIII, 423, (see Servius *ad loc*). It is an archaic form and in prose its use seems to be restricted to colloquial contexts (Caelius in Cic., *Ad Fam.* VIII, 6.4; Plancus in Cic., *ibid.* X, 23, 6). Seneca's use of the form is documented by Favez, *op. cit.* pp. 33-34, cf. *De Ira* III, 21, 3 and is probably part of his attempt to maintain a relaxed colloquial style.

We are back with the commonplace thought that all must die found both in Greek tragedy (Eur. *Alcestis* 416-8) and in Greek Epitaphs "πάντων ἀνθρώπων νόμος ἐστι κοινὸς τὸ ἀποθανεῖν" (*I.G.* 2, 3385, 1). In Latin

literature it makes its appearance in one of Cato's lines "*Dispar vivendi ratio est, mors omnibus una*" (*P.L.M.* III, 236) and is used in combination with the image of life as a journey in the instances cited above. It is a frequent motif of Latin epitaphs (Buecheler, *C.E.L.* 610; 1202, "*nec tibi nec nobis aeternum vivere cessit*", see Lattimore, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-56.)

unus exaequabit cinis

The theme of death the leveller seems to have been common amongst Cynic preachers, cf. Lucian, *Dial. de Mort.* I, where the author puts into the mouth of Diogenes the argument that former rulers have no marks of distinction in Hades (330) and that the deceased poor will enjoy equality with the rich (334). The thought became common in Hellenistic literature (Oltramare, *op. cit.,* th. 25d) p. 49, and J. W. Duff, *Roman Satire,* Berkeley, California, 1936, p. 32). Its first appearance in Latin literature is in Plautus (*Trinummus* 493-4, "*aequo mendicus atque ille opulentissimus censetur censu ad Acheruntem mortuos.*") The theme is found frequently in Horace, (e.g. *Od.* 2, 14, 9-12, and 3, 1, 14-16, "*aequa lege Necessitas/sortitur insignis et imos; omne capax movet urna nomen.*") Seneca returns to this theme later in this work, when extolling the benefits death brings (20, 2) and uses it in a similar way in the *Epistulae Morales* (91, 16, "*aequat omnis cinis. Inpares nascimur, pares morimur... Conditor ille iuris humani non natalibus nos nec nominum claritate distinxit nisi dum sumus: ubi vero ad finem mortalium ventum est 'discede' inquit 'ambitio: omnium quae terram premunt siremps lex esto'*.).

11.3 illa pythicis oraculis adscripta vox Nosce Te

Seneca here translates 'γνῶθι σαυτὸν' one of the maxims inscribed before the temple of Apollo at Delphi, the authorship of which was ascribed by Plato, (*Protagoras* 34A-B) and Pausanias (X, 24, 1) to the seven sages of Greece. The interpretation of this cryptic saying varied somewhat in antiquity from Plato's "Σωφρόνει" (*Charmides* 164E) to Cicero's '*Nosce animum tuum*' (*Tusc Disp.* I, 52) and the basic exhortation here, "Be aware of your mortality". Interestingly Plutarch in his *Consolatio ad Apollonium* (116C) quotes the saying and interprets it this last way in the context of '*oblivio mortalitatis*'.

According to Diogenes Laertius, (II, 33) Socrates used to urge people to look in a mirror as a method of self-examination, and Seneca says the same in talking about the development of mirrors (*N.Q.* I, 17, 4). The importance of self-knowledge is a recurrent theme throughout his work (cf. *Tranq. Animi* 6, 1; *Ep. Mor.* 65.15; *Thyestes* 401-3).

11.3-4 Quid est homo?...

The pessimistic description of the weakness of the human body which dominates these two sections bears some resemblance to Lucretius' comparison of the new-born infant to a ship-wrecked sailor. (The phrases *nudum, ad omnis fortunae contumelias proiectum* and *fletu vitam auspicatum* recall

tum porro puer ut *saevis proiectus ab undis*
navita, *nudus* humi iacet, infans, indigus omni
vitali auxilio, cum primum in luminis oras
nixibus ex alvo matris natura profudit
vagituque locum lugubri complet ut aequumst
cui tantum in vita restet transire malorum.

(*D.R.N.* 5.222-27)

Similar themes, however, appear in the rhetorical schools as is illustrated by the *suasoria* given by Arellius Fuscus to Cicero deliberating whether to beg Antony for mercy (in Sen. *Suas.* 6, 6) and the elder Pliny has a very similar locus on the nature of man (*N.H.* VII, 2 "*hominem tantum nudum et in nuda humo natali die abicit ad vagitus statim et ploratum, nullumque tot animalium aliud pronius ad lacrimas et has protinus vitae principio*"). There is a similar development of this theme in *Ep. Mor.* 120, 16-17.

In quantas cogitationes...venit!

Again we may compare Pliny. (*N.H.* VII, 3 "*heu dementiam ab his initiis existimantium ad superbiam se genitos!*")

12.1 Dolor tuus...utrum sua spectat incommoda an eius qui decessit

After a series of general precepts, Seneca suggests a division of the subject matter into two parts, Marcia's own situation and that of Metilius. Marcia's situation is the theme which links the arguments until 19.3 where Seneca imagines Marcia's interjection "*non movent me detrimenta mea: etenim non est dignus solacio qui filium sibi decessisse sicut mancipium moleste fert, cui quicquam in filio respicere praeter ipsum vacat.*" Plutarch has a similar division of the subject in writing to Apollonius (111e).

As Albertini (*La composition dans les ouvrages philosophiques de Sénèque,* Paris 1923, pp. 53-55) and Grollios (*op.cit.*, 18-19) have pointed out the unity of this section has been much obscured by a number of its features; by the disparate treatment of the two divisions of the section proposed in the sentence *Utrum te...percipere potuisti,* for the first part is dismissed in a sentence; by the lengthy list of exempla (12, 6-16, 4); and by the excursus on Syracuse (17, 2-18, 8).

However the major consolatory principle of the Epicureans, that one should turn the mind of the mourner from its ills to its goods (Cic. *Tusc.*

Disp. III, 31, 76) provides some sort of unifying theme. It is specifically expressed as a principle in 12.2, and the argument that one should find comfort in one's surviving kin (16, 5-10) is a specific application of it. Moreover the excursus which compares both the bearing of children and life itself to a voyage to Syracuse (17.1-18.8) suggests that life's advantages outweigh its disadvantages, and even the disreputable argument on the benefits conferred by '*orbitas*' (19.2), though obviously influenced by the declamatory tradition, might be regarded as a perverted application of the Epicurean principle.

12.2 oportet te non de eo quod detractum est queri, sed de eo gratias agere, quod contigit

An application of the basic Epicurean principle of consolation that the mourners' attention should be turned from the evil to the good. For a discussion see 5.1-4 and note.

qui catulos avesque et frivola animorum oblectamenta summa diligentia nutriunt

Catuli can refer to the young of any animal, but is also particularly used for the young of dogs, as probably here, where the general reference to pet animals is in the phrase '*frivola animorum oblectamenta*'. Dogs which fed from the table were known since Homeric times (*Odyss.* 17, 309), and the Romans knew them not only as farm-animals and hunters but also as pets. Martial wrote an epigram to Publius about his bitch Issa, and carved inscriptions survive from the graves of two pampered bitches, Patrice (*Anth. Lat.* 1176, *C.I.L.* X, 659) and Myia (*Anth Lat.* 1512). All these were lapdogs. Issa slept on the bed and had her picture painted, while Patrice ate from the table and licked the cups. Birds were also extremely popular, especially varieties known for their ability to sing or to speak. Perhaps the best known of these are the *passer* of Lesbia (Catullus 2 and 3), probably some sort of finch, and the *psittacus* which Ovid describes, (*Amores* 2, 6), the green parrot of Indian origin. Agrippina the wife of Claudius was also a bird-fancier owning amongst other birds a white nightingale and a talking thrush (Pliny *N.H.* X, 43, 84; 59, 118). Pliny (*loc.cit.*) also mentions amongst bird pets magpies, ravens, starlings and blackbirds. Amongst other household pets of the first century were various kinds of monkeys and apes, which were taught tricks, the Egyptian ichneumon, snakes and cats. (Pliny *N.H.* VIII, 80.215; Martial, *Epig.* 7, 87; Seneca, *Ep. Mor.* 121, 19).

D. N. G. Reid (*Form and Content in Seneca's Moral Essays,* p. 158) points out that Seneca clearly disapproves of this excessive attention to pets and "uses some invidious philosophic terms for a Stoic (*voluptas, tactus,* etc.)."

12.3 Utrum ne malles degenerem aliquem

The argument that a good son who died young is preferable to a degenerate son still living might be expected to appeal to a Stoic for whom virtue was the sole good. Seneca returns to this point at 22.2 where he is arguing that an early death may have been in Metilius' best interests, and uses it in a later consolatio to Marullus (*Ep. Mor.* 99, 12-13).

an tantae indolis quantae tuus fuit

As in 5, Seneca combines the Epicurean consolatio of gratitude for past benefits with the theme of *laus mortui.* In referring to Metilius' piety and marriage Seneca follows the subjects for praise traditional when the deceased was young and therefore without notable achievements in public life. Menander says of the writer in these circumstances, (περὶ Ἐπιταφίου 419, 29-32) "ὁ δεῖνα δὲ προεφήτευσεν αὐτὰ κάλλιστα, τῶν δὲ οἰκείων καὶ τῶν φίλων εὐέλπις ἦν ἕκαστος, ἔθυον δὲ θεοῖς γενεθλίοις, βωμοὶ δὲ ἡμάττοντο, ἦγε δὲ πανήγυριν ὁ σύμπας οἶκος." Cf. also Menander, *Περὶ Μονῳδίας* 435, 1-5. *Consolatio,* of course, shared a number of topics with other related genres such as lament and epitaph.

nulli fere et magna bona et diuturna contingunt

With the change of the word *bona* to *mala* we would have the Epicurean doctrine that no pain is both severe and long-lasting, which is expounded by Epicurus (*Ep. ad Men.* 133; *K.D.* 4; *Sent. Vat.* 4) and attributed to him by Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* II, 19, 44; *De Fin.* II, 29, 94-95, "*si gravis, brevis; si longus, levis*"). In view of the Epicurean context in which Seneca makes this remark about good things, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that he was influenced by Epicurean teaching on what was for them the supreme evil.

12.4 electam te a dis

The gravestones of those who died young in this period indicate a feeling amongst the survivors that the deceased was chosen because of the *invidia* of some God, or Fate, or Fortune. We may cite *C.E.L.* 54, 2-3.

"matrem non licitum ess[e uni]ca gnata fruei
quam nei esset, credo, nesc[ioqui i]nveidit deus."

also *ibid.* 588 and 596. On this subject see Lier, *op.cit.* 1903, 473-6.

senserunt ista magni duces, senserunt principes;

Seneca's list of exempla includes both commanders and emperors, though the reference here is probably broader. Lucretius uses the same theme to encourage men to face death themselves (*D.R.N.* III, 1027-8), and it is an easy transition from this to the idea that the great suffer bereavement.

ne deos quidem fabulae immunes reliquerunt...divina concidere.

divina here refers to the offspring of Gods such as Hercules and Achilles, with the result that not even the *dei* are immune from bereavement. This consolatory argument goes back to Homer (*Il.* XVIII, 117-8) where Achilles comforts Thetis with the argument

"οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδὲ βίη Ἡρακλῆος φύγε κῆρα
ὅς περ φίλτατος ἔσκε Διὶ Κρονίωνι ἄνακτι"

By the first century A.D. the theme had become a commonplace of literature (Horace, *Odes* I, 28, 7-12; Martial *Epig.* 9, 86) and was also used in the rhetorical schools and in sepulchral inscriptions (Sen., *Contr.* 8, 1; *I.G.* II, 2, 384, 7-8). Menander Rhetor recommends the argument to would-be consolatory writers, 'καὶ φιλοσοφῆσαι...ὅτι ἥρωες καὶ θεῶν παῖδες οὐ διέφυγον.' (*περὶ παραμυθητικοῦ* in Spengel, *Rhet. Graec.* III, 414, 2-6).

12.5 malivolum solacii genus est turba miserorum

Seneca has returned to the basically Cyrenaic argument that suffering, particularly of Marcia's kind is the common lot of humanity, from which the *consolatio per exempla*—others have faced suffering resolutely—stems. This is an argument to which he attaches great importance (*Ad. Polyb.* 1.4, "*Maximum ergo solacium est cogitare id sibi accidisse quod omnes ante se passi sunt omnesque passuri;*"). Nevertheless he is not unaware that if exempla became solely a list of others' misfortunes, then this could appeal best to the spiteful, as Carneades had earlier realised. "*Nam illam* [sc. consolationem] *quidem ex commemoratione alienorum malorum ad malevolos consolandos esse accomodatam*" (Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* III, 60).

ut scias fuisse multos...placide ferendo

At first sight the subsequent examples seem to have the same purpose as those of Livia and Octavia, simply to show that bereavement can be and should be endured, and their seeming repetition has been judged a fault in composition (Favez, *op.cit.,* p. LII; Albertini, *op.cit.* p. 54.). However K. Abel (*op.cit.* p. 22) has suggested that while the earlier examples show the desirability of grief kept within moderation, the examples of those who have shed no tears at all, or only for the shortest possible time, are those used in this section, and they therefore approach more closely to the Stoic

ideal of '*apatheia*'. The splitting of the *exempla* can therefore be seen as part of the educative process of the *consolatio,* showing the ideal only after consent to the previous *exempla* and *praecepta* have brought it within Marcia's reach. Such an approach to a second series of *exempla* fits in with what we know of Seneca's use of thematic repetition in other dialogues. For example in *De Providentia* there are three discussions of suicide (2, 9-12; 3, 14; 6, 7-9), of which the first two involve the exemplary citation of Cato. Yet at each stage its inclusion supports a new and more advanced development in the argument. In the first citation hardships are simply an opportunity for the display of courage which gives pleasure to the Gods, just as a loving father is pleased by bravery on the part of his son. In the second case Cato's suicide is cited at the end of a series of exemples where a man's hardship is shown by general consent to be preferable to another less worthy person's luxury and demonstrates that things are apparent and not real evils, while in the third case the ease of suicide is used to illustrate God's loving concern in giving men such an easy escape from surrounding evil. (On this approach to *De Providentia,* see M. P. Grimal, La composition dans les "dialogues" de Sénèque, II—Le De Providentia, *R.E.A.* 52, 1950, pp. 238-257, and J. R. G. Wright, in C. D. N. Costa (ed.) *Seneca,* London 1974). It seems more reasonable therefore to follow Abel's thesis that the introduction of a further series of *exempla* represents a new stage in the educational process of the dialogue than to view it as the result of hasty or ill-designed composition.

The exempla in chs 13, 14 and 16 were probably derived from some handbook of exempla rather than from strictly historical sources, possibly the source also used by Valerius Maximus, and Seneca is far more concerned with the philosophic point he wishes to make than with strict investigation of historical fact (see notes to ch. 13). It should be pointed out that this was perfectly legitimate in works not claiming to be strictly historical. Cicero makes Atticus say (*Brutus* 42) "*quoniam quidem concessum est rhetoribus ementiri in historiis ut aliquid dicere possint argutius.*" Cicero also describes in very similar terms to Seneca the way in which exempla work "*eorumque qui gravius ferunt* (sc. *orbitatem*) *luctus aliorum exemplis leniuntur;*" (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 58).

12.6 A felicissimo;

A reference to the cognomen Felix adopted by Sulla.

filium amisit

Presumably the son by Metella whose death is mentioned by Plutarch (*Sulla* 37) in his discussion of Sulla's premonitions of his own death. This

son died shortly before Metella herself, whose passing is dated by Plutarch to the *Ludi Victoriae Sullanae*, 27 October-November 1st 81 B.C. (*ibid.* 35 and 37).

cognomen...quod amisso filio adsumpsit

Velleius Paterculus (II, 27, 5) says that Sulla took the name on hearing of the death of the younger Marius at Praeneste, November 2nd 82 B.C., while Plutarch (*op.cit.* 34) says that he ordered 'ἐκέλευσεν' the name to be given at his triumph 27-28 Jan. 81 B.C. Carcopino (*Sylla*, Paris 1950, pp. 106-7) has successfully reconciled the two sources by suggesting that the name was widely but unofficially used from Nov. 82 onwards and was legalised and became obligatory after the triumph. Seneca's vocabulary for the assumption of the cognomen, *usurpasse* and *adsumpsit* corresponds exactly with that of Velleius and we are probably right in thinking that he is referring to the earlier date which, if Plutarch's dating is reasonably accurate, must have been some time before his son's death. Seneca's point is that his son's death did not make people feel that Sulla's assumption of the cognomen had been proved unjustified by events.

quorum illud crimen erat Sulla tam felix

Seneca, though using *felix* here in its commonly accepted sense of prosperous or successful, was probably alluding to the fact that Sulla claimed to be favoured of the Gods and intended his cognomen to be understood in that sense. Both Plutarch (*op.cit.* 34) and Appian (*B.C.* I, 97) while rendering Felix literally as Εὐτυχής, fortunate, point out that in dealing with Greeks he styled himself 'Επαφρόδιτος, favoured of Venus. The *senatus consultum* on the privileges of Stratonica (Dittenberger *O.G.I.S.* 441), which uses this title to the exclusion of Felix or Εὐτυχής, confirms their evidence and certainly Sulla made repeated efforts to suggest that the beneficence of the Gods had granted him success from the time of the Social War onwards (Plutarch, *op.cit.* 6, 2-7; 17, 1-2 (expressly derived from the tenth book of Sulla's memoirs); 19, 5; 27, 3-4 and 6-8; 28, 4); Carcopino (*op.cit.* p. 108) rightly says "l'épithète de Felix lui incorporait à l'état de nature, et comme un don immuable, la félicité que les dieux possèdent en permanence et par définition. En partageant avec eux, Sylla devenait leur mandataire et leur émule."

Sed istud inter res nondum iudicatas abeat, qualis Sulla fuerit

It seems odd that Seneca should be reluctant to pass judgement on a figure who, even on the earliest possible dating of the work, had been dead for 117 years. The vast bulk of exemplary citations of Sulla, collected by

H. W. Litchfield (*op. cit.* p. 52), are hostile. Of the other Senecan citations some are neutral (*Ep. Mor.* 11, 4; *Ad Helv.* 7, 9; *De Clem.* I, 13, 6 and 8) but in others Sulla is assailed for the cruelty, tyranny and lack of good faith shown by his proscriptions (*De Prov.* 3, 7-8; *De Ira* II, 34, 3; *De Ben.* 5, 16, 3; *De Clem.* I, 12). In this citation the *sententia* (...*Sulla tam felix*) bears witness to the hostile tradition, but the parenthesis (*etiam inimici fatebuntur,...*) leaves a more favourable impression. There are two possible reasons for this. The most likely is that Marcia is hardly likely to be encouraged to the '*constantia in morte suorum*' which Seneca would like by the example of one who could be dismissed as a monster of inhuman cruelty. However it is possible that in imperial times attitudes to Marius and Sulla were influenced by attitudes to the imperial system itself, for Marius was often regarded as the political ancestor of Caesar (Virgil, *Georg.* II, 169-70, where both are included in the list of Italian heroes), and hence of future *principes,* while the part of Sulla in the early career of Pompeius Magnus was also noted. Thus in Lucan, Caesar portrays Sulla as Pompey's '*magister*', political mentor, (*B.C.* I, 326) and on the eve of the battle of Philippi, Sulla is placed with the Curii, Decii and Camillus amongst the '*felices umbrae*' who bewail the misfortune the future battle will bring upon Rome (*B.C.* VI, 787). If *Ad Marciam* were written either under Gaius or as late as 62, it is possible that Seneca's disenchantment with the workings of the imperial system could lead him to a more favourable estimation of Sulla.

etiam inimici fatebuntur...bene posuisse.

In this passage *sumpsisse* is likely to refer to his assumption of arms to regain his command against Mithridates, 88 B.C. (Appian *B.C.* I, 57, Velleius Paterculus II, 19) rather than his earlier exploits against Iugurtha or in the Social War; *posuisse,* of course, refers to his abdication in 79 B.C. Although recent research has highlighted the pressure of the Metelli and their noble associates urging Sulla towards resignation (Carcopino *op. cit.* pp. 186-211, but for a different view of Sulla stepping down in a planned gradual retreat, E. Badian in *Historia* 1962, p. 230), nevertheless by anticipating any moves they might make, he won the reputation, certainly amongst the extant historians of antiquity, even those generally hostile, of a voluntary abdication (Appian, *B.C.* I, 103-4; Plutarch, *Sulla* 34, 3; Lucan, *De B.C.* I, 334-5). Seneca's judgement of Sulla's merits and failings is supported by earlier historical sources. Velleius Paterculus comments (II, 17, 1) "*uir qui neque ad finem victoriae satis laudari neque post victoriam abunde vituperari potest.*" Likewise Sallust who regarded Sulla's dic-

tatorship and its aftermath as one of the most disastrous periods of Roman history (*De Con. Cat.* 11, 4-5; 16.4; 37, 6-11) nevertheless says it came after good beginnings (*ibid.* 11, 4) and draws the contrast between his behaviour before and after the civil war in terms similar to Velleius "*ante civilem victoriam...super industriam fortuna fuit, multique dubitavere fortior an felicior esset; nam postea quae fecerit, incertum habeo pudeat an pigeat magis disserere.*" (*Bell. Jug.* 95, 3-4).

hoc de quo agitur...

While Sulla like Marcia lost a son, Marcia could argue that she was now left without a son, whilst Livia whose example has been put forward earlier, and Sulla, had a surviving son, in Sulla's case the twin Faustus. Hence Marcia's imagined complaint "*At hoc iniquior fortuna fuit quod non tantum eripuit filios sed elegit*" (16, 6).

13 Seneca turns here from the example of Sulla to those of Xenophon, Horatius Pulvillus and Aemilius Paulus. Valerius Maximus (*Fact. et Dict. Mem.* 5, 10) also related the examples of Pulvillus and Aemilius in succession under the heading "*de parentibus qui obitum liberorum forti animo tulerunt,*" and included Xenophon '*inter externa exempla.*' A. Klotz (Zur litteratur der Exempla und zur Epitoma Livii, *Hermes* 44, 1909, pp. 198-215) has shown that the accounts of Pulvillus' and Aemilius Paulus' bereavements in Seneca and Valerius Maximus show a far greater connection with each other than either do with Livy. Direct borrowing by Seneca from Valerius is ruled out by his addition of significant detail not found in the earlier author, for example the sentence "*idem tamen...*" (13.2). However the historically inaccurate use of the perfect "*dedit*" (13.3) of the adoption of Aemilius' elder sons (see note *ad loc.*) combined with the use of a historically inferior tradition that Pulvillus was pontifex and not consul suggest that the common source was a handbook of examples rather than a continuous historic narrative. St Jerome (*Ep.* 60, 5) after linking Xenophon to Pericles follows with the same two examples as Seneca, Pulvillus and Aemilius. Perhaps the most puzzling aspect of this chapter is that Seneca, when writing to console Marcia, does not include the last Roman example cited by Valerius, that of Marcius Rex, who as Klotz points out, would have been "ein exemplum domesticum".

13.1 Illum patrem

Valerius Maximus (*Factorum et dictorum memorabilium* 5, 10 ext. 12) tells of Xenophon, that when the death of his elder son Gryllus in the battle of Mantinea, 362 B.C., was reported to him, continued with the sacrifice he had begun.

Coronam capiti detraxit

The evidence of Valerius Maximus (*loc. cit.*) confirms Seneca's report of this action, but adds the interesting detail that when Xenophon heard that his son died fighting bravely, he replaced the crown, thus demonstrating that he took more pleasure from his bravery than sorrow from his death.

Pulvillus

A cognomen of M. Horatius, meaning a little cushion. The name, the precise undertones of which are not clear, is first used by Cicero (*De Domo Sua,* 139).

Pontifex

That Pulvillus was pontifex at the time of the dedication is attested by Cicero (*De Domo Sua,* 139) and Valerius Maximus (*Fact. et Dict. Mem.* 5, 10, 2). Livy (*A.U.C.* 2, 8), Tacitus (*Histories* 3, 72) and Dionysius of Halicarnassus put forward a rival tradition that Horatius dedicated the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol in his second consulship, possibly 507 B.C. The chronology, however, is extremely confused, and evidence cannot be verified with certainty. The evidence of Cicero (*De Domo Sua,* 133) seems to indicate that Seneca's phrases "*postem tenenti et Capitolium dedicanti*" are mutually exclusive, for while the magistrate, in this case the tribune Clodius, dedicates Cicero's house to the Gods, the priest, holding the door-post, reads the words which the magistrate will repeat "*ut mihi praeeatis postemque teneatis.*" Moreover it is the magistrate not the priest who dedicates. What is interesting is not that Seneca should choose what he probably knew to be an inferior tradition but his reasons for doing so. Livy's account suggests rivalry between the consuls on the matter of the dedication, and leaves a strong suspicion that Horatius believed the report of his son's death was a political trick on the part of the followers of his consular colleague Valerius, falsely spread as a stratagem to achieve the transfer of the dedication to Valerius. "*Non crediderit factum an tantum animo roboris fuerit nec traditur certum, nec interpretatio est facilis.*" If Seneca were to accept this version of events the exemplum would be of dubious value in exhorting Marcia to bear her son's death bravely, a drawback which is not present in the case of the seemingly inferior tradition he chooses to follow.

13.3 Paulus circa illos...egit Persen.

L. Aemilius Paulus, cos 182 and 168, defeated Perses V last king of Macedonia at Pydna during his second consulship, the day after an eclipse of the moon, the date according to the then current system of calculation being September 4th; however working on the basis of known eclipses, this

would give a data according to the Julian Calendar of June 22nd (Livy XLIV, 37, 8). Perses and his cavalry escaped, but he was unable to raise any support and he surrendered on the island of Samothrace. (Livy XLV, 6, 10; Plutarch, *Aemilius Paulus* 26, 4). In November 167 Aemilius celebrated his triumph in which Perses and his three children were led in the procession (Livy XLV, 40, 6; Plutarch, *op.cit.* 33-34).

duos filios in adoptionem dedit

The mistaken implication of Seneca's Latin is that Aemilius allowed two sons to be adopted around the time of his triumph. Plutarch (*op.cit.* 5, 3) records that the two children of Aemilius' first wife Papiria were given for adoption after his second wife had given him two other sons; that is the adoptions may have taken place ten or more years earlier. Of these the elder was adopted by Fabius Maximus, and the younger, who became Scipio Aemilianus, by the son of Scipio Africanus. Both these adopted sons served under Paulus in Macedonia (Livy, 44 passim; Plutarch, *op. cit.* 15; = Polybius 29, 14; *op.cit.* 22). Quintus Fabius Maximus Aemilianus was consul in 145, Scipio Aemilianus held consulships in 146 and 134, defeating first the Carthaginians and then the Numantines. The antithesis of the final two clauses of the period (*duos...dedit, quos...extulit*) was doubtless designed to heighten the pathos of Aemilius' position and hence make him an even more notable exemplar of *constantia.*

quos sibi servaverat extulit

Paulus' two sons by his second wife died, one five days before his father's triumph, the other three days after. One was fourteen and the other twelve but sources differ in the order of their deaths. Livy places the death of the younger before the triumph (XLV, 40, 7) Plutarch (*op.cit.* 35, 2) the elder.

quales retentos putas...

Seneca's remark here is quite unfounded. Given the date of the adoption (see note supra) it was doubtless the maternity of the children concerned rather than any consideration of their moral qualities which determined the choice of children to be retained. It was very much a mark of the declaimers to attempt to add pathos to the situation they describe by this use of *color.*

vacuum Pauli currum

Once again the sources differ. The speech which Livy (XLV, 41) puts into Aemilius' mouth implies that no son was on his chariot, "*rediens alterum ex Capitolio prope iam expirantem inveni.*" However Valerius Maximus

(*Fact. et Dict.* V, 10, 2) says "*alter in triumphali curru conspectus post diem tertium expiravit*". The historical should probably be preferred to the exemplary source.

contionatus est tamen...

The tribune of the people, M. Antonius, convoked an assembly of the people which it was customary for successful generals to address after their triumph and relate their deeds (Livy XLV 40). The remarks attributed to Paulus by Livy, Plutarch and Valerius Maximus (*loc.cit.*) all agree in substance with what Seneca says, namely that Paulus had feared that fortune would balance her favours shown in the defeat of Perses by some corresponding misfortune and that he was relieved that fortune had acquiesced in his prayer that his private fortunes rather than those of the state should suffer.

13.4 Non contigit tamen...

Though there is no evidence that Perses saw Paulus at all after the triumph, Plutarch (*op.cit.* 36) also attests Paulus' dignified bearing in his bereavement.

14.1 Lucium...Bibulum et C. Caesarem

Bibulus and Caesar were consular colleagues in 59 B.C. Although the praenomen Lucius is also given by Appian (*De B.C.* II), Caesar himself has Marcus (*De B.C.* III, 5, 4) and is supported by Valerius Maximus (IV, 1.15), and Livy *Periochae* 103). Bibulus' full name was Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus.

inter collegas inimicissimos concordem fortunam.

The *chiasmus* and *contentio* (*inimicissimos concordem*) well illustrate Seneca's pointed style. *Inimicos* is however historically accurate, for Appian (*B.C.* II, 9) records that the senatorial support which secured Bibulus' election was specifically aimed at holding Caesar in check, and before his abstention from public business Bibulus tried forcibly to intervene in the forum to veto Caesar's proposed agrarian legislation, but was removed by violence and found no-one in the senate willing to take action on his behalf. (Appian, *B.C.* II, 11; Suet. *Div. Iul* 20; *Dio Cassius* 38, 4-6.)

14.2 duo simul filii interfecti sunt, Aegyptio quidem militi ludibrio habiti.

In A.D. 50 Bibulus was proconsul of Syria and had sent his two sons to Egypt to secure military support against the Parthians from the Gabiniani, soldiers left behind in Egypt in 55 by Gabinius, proconsul of Syria, who in

that year had restored Ptolemy XII Auletes to the Egyptian throne. These soldiers found Egyptian life so attractive that they killed Bibulus' two sons rather than take up the new service (Caesar *B.C.* III, 110, 6; Val. Max. IV, 1, 15.). *Aegyptio militi* is singular for plural, and while it would be inaccurate to regard them as native Egyptians, the Romans frequently used a local adjective to describe the soldiers serving in a particular place for a long period (*Britannicum militem,* Tac. *Hist.* II, 32.). The Gabiniani had, however, lost all sense of loyalty to Rome, so that the adjective may refer to their 'Egyptianised' manner of life.

ut non minus...lacrimis esset.

"so that its author was no less a worthy cause for tears than the bereavement itself." Roman literature attests in many places the contempt of native Romans for the oriental and the orientalised. Significant passages include Vergil's treatment of Antony's retinue at Actium (*Aeneid* 8, 685-88), and Juvenal's attitude to Crispinus (*Sat.* I, 26-29; IV, 1-33) and his Egyptian satire (XV). Seneca had himself been to Egypt during the prefecture of his uncle, C. Galerius, (*Ad Helv.* 19, 4 and M. Griffin, *Seneca, A philosopher in politics,* Oxford 1976, p. 43), and possessed estates there (*Ep. Mor.* 77.3 and M. Griffin *op.cit.* pp. 287-8).

toto honoris sui anno...domi latuerat.

To prevent Caesar's agrarian legislation, Bibulus had proclaimed the remainder of the year 59 a sacred period, so that technically it was illegal to hold a legislative assembly of the people (Dio 38.6). When his attempt to enforce the ban on public business met with violence and he was unable to secure the open support of senators, he withdrew from public life and remained at home, (see supra, Appian *B.C.* II, 10-12; Velleius Paterculus II, 44, 5), saying that the omens were evil. Suetonius (*Div. Iul.* 20) remarks "*(Caesar) in eam coegit desperationem* (sc. Bibulum) *ut quoad potestate abiret, domo abditus nihil aliud quam per edicta obnuntiaret.*" *collegae* is here objective genitive, "because he hated his colleague."

postero die...processit ad solita imperatoris officia.

Whether one adopts the reading of the γ tradition *imperatoris* or of a fourteenth century manuscript in Breslau collated by Fickert *imperii* is not important. The reading of A, *imp.* permits either interpretation. The point is that Bibulus took up again virtually immediately the duties of the proconsulship of Syria, which included waging war. "*cum enim arderet Syria bello et Bibulus in tanto maerore suo maximam curam belli sustineret* (Cicero, *Ad Att.* VI, 5, 3). Seneca cites the example as one of '*constantia in morte suorum*'. While

this is obviously the most relevant aspect of Bibulus' behaviour for Seneca's purpose, Valerius Maximus had found another aspect of his self-control even more remarkable. Cleopatra had sent his sons' murderers to Bibulus and allowed him to take what vengeance he liked. Bibulus however sent them back to Cleopatra saying that the right of punishment of the criminals belonged not to him but to the senate (Val. Max. *Fact. et Dict.,* IV, 1, 15). Valerius therefore cites him amongst the examples of *moderatio.*

tam cito...luxerat

Seneca heightens the antithesis by use of the cognates *luctum* and *luxerat.*

14.3 cum Britanniam peragraret...audiit decessisse filiam.

Caesar's only daughter Julia died in 54 B.C. while Caesar was in Britain, but according to Plutarch (*Caesar* 23.4) he did not hear of it until he received letters on his return to Gaul. Julia had been married to Pompey in 59 B.C. to cement the political alliance of her father and her new husband, and in 54 B.C. died after childbirth, and was buried in the Campus Martius at the insistence of the people (Plutarch *Caesar* 23, 4; *Pompeius* 53, 4-5; Livy, *Periochae* 106; Dio 39, 64). Her child, described by Velleius Paterculus (II, 47, 2) as a son, but as a daughter by Plutarch and Dio (*loc.cit.*), died shortly afterwards.

publica secum fata ducentem

Plutarch, Velleius (*loc.cit.*) and Appian (*B.C.* II, 19) all report a widespread contemporary fear that Julia's death would break the already somewhat strained alliance of Pompey and Caesar, thereby plunging the state into political chaos. Lucan suggests that she might have restrained her father and her husband and kept the peace as the Sabine women had done in the early legend "*quod si tibi fata dedissent/maiores in luce moras, tu sola furentem/inde virum poteras atque hinc retinere parentem* (*B.C.* I, 114-116). He may have been right, for Plutarch attests Pompey's great love for his wife (*Pompeius* 53, 4), while Caesar saw the danger caused by his daughter's death and tried to use other women to forge a new marriage alliance with Pompey (Suet. *Div. Iul.* 27).

non aequo laturus animo...magnum

Seneca alludes here to Pompey's cognomen Magnus and to his jealousy of any possible rival. Likewise Lucan (*B.C.* I, 125-6) comments "*nec quemquam iam ferre potest Caesarve priorem/Pompeiusue parem.*" Caesar himself had said (*B.C.* I, 4) "*Pompeius...neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat*", and similar remarks can be found in Velleius Paterculus (II, 29, 3 and 33, 3) and Florus (IV, 2, 4).

in commune crescerent

Most modern editors (Favez, Viansano), prefer the reading of *A cresceret*, "when he (Caesar) grew powerful to the common advantage", but Pompey has been the centre of our attention, and the change of subject to Caesar seems rather abrupt, so that Waltz and Basore may be right in following the reading of the γ tradition *crescerent*, taking *quae* as the subject, and translating "even though these additions grew to the public advantage".

tam cito...omnia solebat

Here Seneca achieves his sententia by the juxtaposition of the ideas of Caesar's conquest of his grief and his military victories.

15.1 dis geniti deosque udituri dicantur

The Iulii Caesares traced their lineage back to Iulus/Ascanius, son of Aeneas (Vergil, *Aen.* I, 267 and Servius, *ad. loc.* and *Aen.* I, 288) and hence to two gods, Iuppiter Indiges, the name under which Aeneas was worshipped after his death (Livy, I, 2, 6), and Venus the legendary mother of Aeneas. This connection of the gens Iulia was emphasised on coinage by Sex. Iulius Caesar, c. 130-125 B.C., and some twenty years later by L. Iulius Caesar, and was referred to by the future dictator in 68 B.C. when he was speaking at the funeral of his aunt, the wife of Marius (Suet. *Div. Iul.*, 6, 1 and S. Weinstock, *Divus Iulius*, Oxford 1971, pp. 9-12, 15-18). Caesar clearly made much of this connection, being known to his opponents as '*Venere prognatus*' at the outbreak of civil war (Caelius in Cic., *Ad Fam.* 8.15.2) and instituting a public cult of Venus Genetrix during his dictatorship (Weinstock *op.cit.* pp. 82-88). Augustus and his successors, as well as claiming these divine ancestors, could claim relationship with nearer divinities, first Divus Iulius and then Divus Augustus. Seneca's phraseology at this point recalls Apollo's words to Iulus in the *Aeneid* (IX, 642) '*dis genite et geniture deos*'. Seneca's *deos udituri* must refer to the Caesars in general and future possible deities, for even if we accept the latest possible dating for the *Ad Marciam* and assign it to Nero's reign, Claudius was not a Julian, and it is most unlikely that Seneca is referring to Caligula's short-lived creation, the goddess Drusilla. Seneca's insertion of the word *dicantur* might be taken to imply some scepticism about the consecration of deceased *princeps*, for he does find humour in the picture of Augustus taking part in a council of the Gods (*Apocolocyntosis* 10ff.). However it was a perfectly acceptable Stoic doctrine that those who had rendered exceptional services to mankind while alive should be considered worthy of divine honours, (Cic. *De Nat. De.* I, 15, 38 and II, 24, 62; also

Weinstock, *op.cit.* pp. 288-90) and Seneca may have no reservations in mind.

suam fortunam...quemadmodum alienam

Favez (*op.cit.* p. 47) aptly quotes the explanation of Lipsius "*Alios felices miserosque facere posse videntur, non sese.*"

15.2 Divus Augustus

Once again Seneca turns to people whom Marcia, the client of Livia would have known and remembered. He uses the Caesars in the same way in his exhortations to Polybius.

amissis liberis, nepotibus, exhausta Caesarum turba.

A somewhat exaggerated claim. Augustus had only one daughter Julia, by his third wife Scribonia, and though disgraced, she survived her father by a few months (Tac., *Ann.* I, 53; Suet., *Tib.* 50). Though he adopted her sons by Agrippa, Gaius and Lucius Caesar, these are obviously described as *nepotibus* not *liberis.* Moreover Augustus was survived by three grandchildren, his grandson Agrippa Postumus and his granddaughters Julia and Agrippina. What Seneca must mean here by the whole phrase is heirs of Augustus' blood thought worthy by him of succession. The Julias had both been exiled, the mother first to Pandateria and then to Rhegium, the daughter to Trimerum (Tac., *Ann.* 1, 53; IV, 71). Although for a time Agrippa Postumus was adopted along with Tiberius, he was subsequently banished to Planasia and put to death soon after Augustus' demise, allegedly on his instructions (Tac., *Ann.* I, 3; I, 6; Suet., *Div. Aug.* 65). Agrippina by her marriage to Germanicus figured in Augustus' dynastic plans. Of the grandsons who died, Lucius died of a sudden illness at Massilia in 2 A.D. while on his way to Spain, and Gaius was treacherously wounded in a colloquy in Armenia in 1 A.D. while besieging Artagira, became physically and mentally ill as a result of his wound, and after remaining for some time in Syria, died in 4 A.D. at Limyra while returning to Italy. (Velleius Pat. II, 102, 2-3; Dio 55, 10a, 6-10). If *nepotibus* has its most general meaning it might also include Augustus' nephew Marcellus, for which see notes on 2.3.

adoptione desertam domum fulsit

Although Augustus' grandsons were adopted as sons, Seneca must be referring here to his adoption of his stepson Tiberius in 4 A.D. Certainly Augustus would have considered the bereavements which prompted this adoption as instances of fortune doing him violence, having himself written in his will "*quoniam atrox fortuna Gaium et Lucium filios mihi eripuit,*

Tiberius Caesar...heres esto." Barbara Levick (Atrox Fortuna, *C.R.* XXII, 1972, 309-11) has sensibly pointed out that Augustus' choice of phrase is more expressive of his distress at the loss of his grandsons than any hesitations about Tiberius; in this passage likewise Seneca's use of the *locus communis de fortuna* of the circumstances surrounding Tiberius' adoption should not be taken to imply any dissatisfaction with his successor on Augustus' part.

cuius iam res agebatur...neminem queri.

Seneca alludes semi-humorously to the deification of Augustus in 14 A.D. Although the humour is restrained it is in keeping with his references to the deified Augustus in the *Apocolocyntosis* (1, 2; 10, 1) "*tunc divus Augustus surrexit sententiae suae loco dicendae et summa facundia disseruit: 'ego' inquit 'p.c., vos testes habeo, ex quo deus factus sum, nullum me verbum fecisse: semper meum negotium ago.*'"

15.3 Ti. Caesar et quem genuerat et quem adoptaverat amisit

Seneca's choice of example is perhaps not the most fortunate, since Tiberius' minister Sejanus was apparently responsible for the enforced suicide of Marcia's father and the ban on his books, presumably with the Emperor's consent (see notes on 1, 2). Moreover Suetonius suggests that Tiberius was in any case lacking in paternal affection (*Tib.* 52) "*Filiorum neque naturalem Drusum neque adoptivum Germanicum patria caritate dilexit.*" Of his sons, Germanicus, who had been adopted at the same time as Augustus had adopted Tiberius himself, (Suet. *Tib.* 15.2) died in Egypt in 19 A.D. Despite the rumours of poison, and the involvement of Gn. Piso and Plancina with Tiberius' connivance, the causes were probably natural, dysentery being likely (Tac. *Ann.* II, 69-73). His natural son Drusus died in 23 A.D. It is commonly accepted that he was poisoned on Sejanus' initiative but the fact that this story was put about eight years later, after the praetorian prefect's death, by his former wife, coupled with Drusus' serious illness only two years earlier, must cast some doubt on this version of events (Tac. *Ann.* IV, 8-11, his previous illness *ibid.* III, 49).

It is noteworthy that for the purposes of this consolation, Seneca draws a sharp distinction between the activities of Sejanus who is made responsible for Cremutius' death, and his imperial master. See also the note on *puer admodum dignus sacerdotio* 24.3.

pro rostris laudavit filium.

filium in this case refers to Drusus. Germanicus died in Egypt and was cremated in Antioch and Tiberius made no public appearance either at the ceremonies which accompanied the carrying of his ashes from Brundisium

to Rome or at their burial in the Mausoleum of Augustus (Tac. *Ann.* II, 73; III, 3-4). Of Drusus however Tacitus says "*laudante filium pro rostris Tiberio*" (*Ann.* IV, 12).

interiecto tantummodo velamento quod pontificis oculos a funere arceret

Tiberius, like his predecessor Augustus, was *pontifex maximus,* and his ceremonial purity would have been polluted by looking upon Drusus' corpse. Servius (*Ad. Aen.* XI.2) describes the custom "*consuetudo Romana fuit ut polluti funere minime sacrificarent. Si tamen contingeret ut uno eodemque tempore et funestaretur quis et cogeretur operam dare sacrificiis, elaborabat ut ante sacra compleret quam funus agnosceret.*" Tiberius was obviously particular about such details, rebuking Germanicus because despite his position as augur he took an active part in the burial of Varus' lost legions (Tac., *Ann.* I, 62).

flente populo Romano non flexit vultum

The historical narratives all attest the resolution of Tiberius on this occasion, conducting business in the senate in the interval between his son's death and funeral, forbidding a prolonged period of mourning, changing nothing in his normal habits and not allowing others to make changes (Tac., *Ann.* IV, 8; Suet., *Tib.* 52; Dio Cassius, 57, 22, 3). Tacitus suggests that the tears of senate and people were insincere and that they secretly rejoiced at the prospect of a successor in the line of Germanicus (*Ann.* IV, 12), although Tacitus' own evidence in *Ann.* IV, 8-9 suggests otherwise, as does the necessity for Tiberius to forbid further mourning (Suet. *loc.cit.*).

Experiendum se dedit Seiano...suos perdere.

The full meaning of this sentence depends upon the ambiguity of *perdere* 'to lose' as in the case of Drusus or 'destroy' as in the case of Sejanus himself in 31 A.D. Quite what prompted Sejanus' destruction we do not know. Suetonius says that he was planning revolution (*Tib.* 65), Dio simply that he had become too powerful (58.5). However on Jan. 1st 31 A.D., when Sejanus was entering on the consulship with Tiberius as his colleague, "*verbosa et grandis epistula venit a Capreis*" which led the senate to condemn him to prison and later in the day to death. (Juvenal, *Sat.* X, 71-2; Dio 58, 10-11). This reference to the fate of her father's persecutor may have been designed to make Marcia more receptive to the idea of Tiberius as an exemplar.

15.4 Videsne...

At this point Seneca draws the general conclusion to which his examples have been pointing, that bereavement is the common lot of humanity. *Casus* and *tempestas* refer not just to *mors* (Favez p. 49) but *mors propinquorum.*

nulli contigit impune nasci.

For a discussion of the theme of life's ills, the inevitable consequences of birth, see the notes to ch. 10, 5-7.

16.1 par illis, mihi crede, vigor, par ad honesta...facultas est

It was orthodox Stoic doctrine that women have the same capacity for virtue as men and that virtue is essentially the same in both sexes since men and women share a common humanity. Hence women like other socially underprivileged groups were encouraged to philosophic activity, (*S. V.F.* III, 253-4). This did not however entail the rejection in practice of the male domination practised in Roman society. For Stoic virtue involved living consistently with nature (Cic., *De Fin.* III, 7, 26), and while this involved conformity to general nature and individual character, it also included maintenance of the social persona which one had been allotted in the universal scheme of things. (Cic., *De Off.* I, 32, 115). Just as a slave was expected to perform his ministeria (*De Ben.* III, 18, 1), so might a woman be expected to play the part of a woman, not only in dress and deportment (*De Off.* I, 36, 130) but also in other aspects of social life.

In qua...urbe

This phrase is usually regarded as important evidence as far as the dating of the work is concerned, in that it shows Seneca must have been in Rome at the time of composition. Thus argue Buresch, Gercke, Favez, Albertini, Bourgery, Traglia et alii. Heidbreede did not take the passage that way and attributed the work to Seneca's exile in Corsica. While it is most probable that Seneca is here only giving a frame of reference—he and Marcia would think of themselves as Romans wherever they happened to be, it is unlikely, though not I think impossible, that Seneca would have used such a phrase when access to the city was denied him.

regem...Lucretia et Brutus deiecerunt

The classical bibliography of the Lucretia and Brutus legends is collected by R. M. Ogilvie in his *Commentary on Livy I-V* (Oxford, 1965). All versions of the legend, which is known to go back as far as Fabius Pictor (Dionysius of Halicarnassus 4.64.3), agree in maintaining that Lucretia, wife of Collatinus, was forced to commit adultery by a son of Tarquin and

subsequently committed suicide after relating the incident to her father and husband and urging them to avenge her. It was this event which caused Brutus to throw off his long maintained mask of stupidity and lead patricians and people in revolt against the Tarquins. Hence *Bruto libertatem debemus, Lucretiae Brutum.* Within this framework there are a considerable number of variations of detail. For example, while Servius (*Ad Aen.* 8.646) names Arruns as the offending son, Livy (1.57) Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4.64) Dio Cassius *frag* II, 13-19) and Valerius Maximus (*Fact. et dict. mem.* 6, 1.1) all name Sextus Tarquinius. While Brutus is generally described as *tribunus celerum* Livy (1.59) D.H. (4.71) or *tribunus equitatum celerum* (Servius *loc.cit.*), Cicero (*De Rep.* 2, 45-6) describes him as a completely private citizen. It is probably right to regard the accounts of Livy, Ovid (*Fasti* II, 729-851) Servius and Dio which include rivalry between Sextus and Collatinus on the chastity of their wives and a 'contest of virtue' as later embellishments of an earlier account, going back to Fabius Pictor and preserved in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, which simply says that Sextus was sent by Tarquin to Collatia to perform certain military services. Interestingly Dionysius also suggests that the protracted siege of Ardea caused sufficient discontent to make Rome ripe for revolution (4.64). How far it is possible to separate fact from patriotic fiction is uncertain, for the plebeian noble house of the Bruti regarded Brutus as '*auctor nobilitatis*', which is most unlikely, for this Brutus, if he existed, must have been patrician, and the Lucretia story bears many resemblances to that of Verginia (Livy III, 44-49) stabbed by her father to escape the lust of Appius Claudius the decemvir.

Lucretia is generally cited as an example of *pudicitia* (Valerius Maximus) but also of *constantia* and *fortitudo* as here. Seneca here uses her example and that of Cloelia to illustrate the general point that women are as capable of virtue as men before going on to examples of women who have shown *constantia in morte suorum.* A parallel for the idea of Lucretia's courage as manly is found in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4.82, 3) where Brutus is made to address the popular assembly in the following way: "ἔπειτα σὺ μέν, ὦ Λουκρητία, γυναικείας τυχοῦσα φύσεως ἀνδρὸς εὐγενοῦς φρόνημα ἔσχες, ἡμεῖς δ' ἄνδρες γενόμενοι γυναικῶν χείρους ἀρετῇ γενησόμεθα." Also Valerius Maximus *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 6.1.1) "*Lucretia cuius virilis animus maligno errore fortunae muliebre corpus sortitus est.*" The fate of Lucretia became a stock theme of the rhetorical schools in the controversia "*Adultera haec an casta iudicanda sit*" and Augustine, anxious to assert the superiority of Christian over pagan virtue, has an interesting variation on the theme when he argues that Lucretia, if not consenting to intercourse, was guilty

of the murder of a chaste woman, but if secretly consenting, was an adultress and unworthy of her high reputation (Aug. *De Civ. Dei.* I, 19).

Cloeliam, contempto et hoste et flumine

According to the traditional legend, after their expulsion, the Tarquins found refuge with Lars Porsenna, king of Clusium who attempted to restore them to Rome by force. Rome was saved by three heroic exploits, those of Horatius Cocles, Mucius and Cloelia—usually closely linked both in historical and exemplary citation, (Livy II, 10-13, Florus I, 10, 3, Juvenal, *Sat.* VIII, 264-5). These exploits produced such admiration for Roman courage in Porsenna that he abandoned the siege. Alföldi (*Early Rome and the Latins,* p. 155) dismisses the stories as "invented...in order to veil...the disgrace of the subjugation of Rome by Porsenna." The ancient authorities agree in saying that Cloelia, given as hostage to Porsenna in accordance with a treaty led an escape across the Tiber by the other *uirgines,* and that though Porsenna insisted on her surrender, he thereupon released her and other hostages of her choosing because of his admiration for her courage. Once again there are variations of detail. Vergil (*Aen.* VIII, 651), Livy (*loc.cit.*), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (5.33), Juvenal (*loc.cit.*) and Servius (*Ad Aen.* 646) all speak of Cloelia swimming across the Tiber but Valerius Maximus (3.2.2), Plutarch (*Poplicola* 19) and Florus (1, 10.7) influenced by the equestrian statue, on which see note infra, all describe her as crossing the river on horseback. Clearly the story has been embellished, but in itself it is not impossible in that the giving of hostages is consistent with a Roman reverse, and the Cloelii seem to have a proper place in the Fasti of early Rome. Pliny the Elder has an entirely different version of the story however (*N.H.* 34, 29), namely that the only hostage to escape was Valeria, daughter of Publicola, while Florus (1.10.3) seems aware of the quasi mythical nature of the story, "*Horatius, Mucius, Cloelia, qui, nisi in annalibus forent, hodie fabulae viderentur.*" Cloelia is again used as a general example of female *fortitudo* and we may notice the express reference to her almost masculine behaviour "*tantum non in viros transcripsimus.*"

equestri insidens statuae in Sacra Via

All the sources including Pliny the Elder (*N.H. loc.cit.*) say that an equestrian statue was erected in Cloelia's honour, though the initiative for its erection is variously ascribed. Pliny (*loc.cit.*) suggests the hostages, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, (V. 35.2) the Romans, though leaving the actual responsibility to the fathers of the hostages, Livy (*loc.cit.*) the Romans, and Servius (*loc.cit.*) the Romans on Porsenna's request. However other

evidence of Pliny (*N.H.* 34, 15) suggests that any such honouring of Cloelia is unlikely, since the practice of honouring mortals with statues developed from that of representing the Gods in this way, and that the first statue of a God in Rome was that dedicated to Ceres and paid for from the property of the executed Sp. Cassius in 485 B.C. By the first century B.C. the old statue was believed to be that of Cloelia and it has proved impossible to reach any certainty about its original identity, though Venus in some form is the most likely candidate (cf. Ogilvie, *op.cit.* p. 268). The statue, which the tense of *exprobrat* shows was standing in Seneca's time, was the second of its type, the first having burnt down before the time of Dionysius of Halicarnassus (V.35.2).

16.3 primam Scipionis filiam, Gracchorum matrem

Cornelia, youngest daughter of Scipio Africanus, was married after her father's death to one of his political opponents, Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, by the choice of her relatives. This version of the marriage which goes back to Polybius (XXXII, 13) and also appears in Livy (38, 57, 3-5) is to be preferred to a rival tradition, juxtaposed in Livy (38, 57, 5-8) and found independently in Valerius Maximus (*Fact. et Dict. Mem.* 4, 2, 3) and Aulus Gellius (*Noct. Att.* 12, 8) that the two men were publicly reconciled at a banquet in honour of Jove. It was by this Sempronius Gracchus that Cornelia had her twelve children including the tribunes Tiberius and Gaius.

totidem funeribus

Seneca who relates the same example in the *Ad Helviam* (16, 6) is probably in error here. Plutarch records that nine of Cornelia's children died in infancy or childhood. But as well as Tiberius and Gaius, a daughter Sempronia also survived, was unhappily married to Scipio Aemilianus and according to Valerius Maximus survived at least until 101 when she refuted L. Equitius' claim to be a son of Tiberius. (Plutarch *Tib. Gracch.* 1, 4-5; Appian *B.C.* I, 20; Val. Max. *op.cit.* 3.8.6). Although Cornelia certainly survived her sons, it is unlikely that one who was of marriageable age in 183 B.C. would have still been alive in 101.

facile est

"It does not matter about the rest." Martial, (*Epig.* I, 18, 5), uses a similar expression "*de me facile est, scelus est iugulare Falernum* and Friedlaender (*ad loc.*) gives further examples in Quintilian (*Decl.* 371) and Lactantius (*Ep.* 56). See also *O.L.D. facile* (7) p. 667.

etiam qui bonos viros negaverit magnos fatebitur.

The violent circumstances of the deaths of Tiberius in 133 B.C. and Gaius in 121 combined with the controversial measures of their tribunates produced rival traditions about their merits immediately. The favourable tradition probably goes back as far as Gaius' frequent references to his brother in his speeches (Plutarch *Gaius Gracchus* 3, 2) while the hostile tradition is clearly linked to the remarks of Q. Pompeius in the senate that Eudemus had been seen offering a diadem and a purple robe to Tiberius 'ὡς μέλλοντι βασιλεύειν ἐν Ρώμῃ' (Plut. *T.G.* 14, 3: Appian, *B.C.* I, 13). Of our extant sources Sallust (*B.J.* 31, 7; 42, 1-3) and to a lesser extent Plutarch and Appian seem to have been influenced by the favourable tradition while Cicero (*Pro Sest.* 103; *Lael.* 40-41; *De Prov. Cons.* 18; *Brutus* 103 *et.al.*) and Velleius represent that of the opponents of the Gracchi. Nevertheless Cicero is forced to pay tribute to their education and gifts of oratory ("*diserti et omnibus vel naturae vel doctrinae praesidiis ad dicendum parati*" *De Orat.* I, 38; also *Brutus* 103-104; 125-126). Likewise Velleius comments (II, 7, 1) "*viri optimis ingeniis male usi...qui si civilem dignitatis concupissent modum, quidquid tumultuando adipisci gestierunt, quietis obtulisset respublica.*" Added point may have been given to Seneca's phrase '*bonos negaverit*' because the opponents of the Gracchi styled themselves '*boni*' (Cic. *De Leg.* III, 20; *Pro Sest.* 103; inter alia). Although Seneca speaks elsewhere (*Brev. Vit.* 6.1) of '*mala Gracchana*' both in this passage and in the *Ad Helviam* he would want to emphasise the greatness of Cornelia's loss by presenting her sons in the best light possible.

et occisos vidit et insepultos

Both Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus were killed by political violence, the elder brother on the day of the tribunician elections 133 B.C. by a mob led by the Pontifex Maximus, P. Scipio Nasica, and the younger in 121 on the initiative of the consul L. Opimius who had been fortified by the so-called *senatus consultum ultimum.* The bodies of both were thrown into the Tiber along with those of their followers who had been killed, the head of Gaius being cut off first and displayed to Opimius (Velleius, II, 3; II, 6; Plutarch *Tib. Gracch.* 19-20, 2; *G. Gracch.* 13, 3-17, 5; Appian *B.C.* I, 16; I, 26). The phrase '*et insepultos*' is further evidence of the importance Seneca would expect a Roman to attach to proper burial.

Numquam inquit non felicem me dicam...

Cornelia's resolution after the death of her two sons is described by Plutarch in terms similar to those of Seneca. He represents her at

Misenum talking of the achievements and deaths of her sons without emotion, as if she were talking of the heroes of early legend (Plutarch *G. Gracch.* 19, 1-2).

16.4 Cornelia Livii Drusi.

The word *uxor* is here omitted as in *Verania Pisonis* (Plin., *Ep.* II, 20); see Madvig *Latin Grammar* (Eng. translation Oxford 1851) p. 243, Ernout and Thomas *Syntaxe Latine* p. 36. The reference to her son, *iuvenem et seq,* shows her husband to have been M. Livius Drusus, the tribune of 122 who was used by the anti-Gracchan group to win popular favour against Gaius Gracchus. He won the appellation '*patronus senatus*' and became consul in 112 and censor in 109, dying during his term of office. (Cic., *Brut.* 28, 109; Suet., *Tib.* 3, 2; Plut., *Quaest. Rom.* 50).

clarissimum iuvenem.

The reference here is to M. Livius Drusus, tribune on the plebs in 91 B.C. Although elsewhere Seneca speaks disparagingly of his hierarchy of admission to his presence (*De Ben.* 6.34) and refers to him as "*a puero seditiosus et foro gravis*" (*De Brev. Vit.* 6.2), for the same reasons as applied in the case of the Gracchi he here follows a more favourable tradition. Because Drusus undertook his measures with strong backing from groups among the 'nobiles' he has had a generally more favourable press than the Gracchi (cf. Cicero, *Pro Mil.* 7.16; *Pro Rab. Post.* 7.6; *Pro Cluentio* 56; Diodorus Siculus, 37, 10; Velleius II, 13-14, especially the concluding anecdote).

vadentem per gracchana vestigia.

'striding in the steps of the Gracchi'; cf. *De Brev. Vit.* 6.1 "*L.D...cum...mala Gracchana mouisset*". Drusus' 'Gracchan measures' included agrarian legislation like that of Tiberius Gracchus, and the founding of colonies, frumentary legislation and the granting of citizenship to the allied Italian peoples (Livy, *Per.* 71; Velleius II, 14; Appian *B.C.* I, 35; Florus II, 5). The phrase can however give a misleading impression, as these measures were part of a 'package deal' to secure the acquiescence of the plebs and the Italians in the return of control of the law-courts from the *equites* to the senate, which would be a direct repeal of the legislation of Gaius Gracchus. There was senatorial support for these measures, "*tribunatus pro senatus auctoritate susceptus*" (Cic., *De Orat.* 1.7.24) and one of the effects of the granting of citizenship to the Italians would have been to establish ties of patronage between the nobiles and the newly enfranchised.

(Velleius II, 13, Livy and Florus, *loc.cit.*, see further E. Badian, *Foreign Clientelae* pp. 215-225, and *From the Gracchi to Sulla, Historia* 11, 1962, pp. 223-227.)

imperfectis tot rogationibus

The only bill not to pass the comitia seems to have been the proposal on Italian citizenship. Livy makes clear that the agrarian, frumentary and judicial legislation was all carried (*loc.cit.*), but it was subsequently annulled by senatorial decree (Cic., *pro Cornel.* apud Ascon. 68.C; *De Dom.* 16, 41; *De Leg.* II, 12, 31). On this question see Badian, *Foreign Clientelae* 217 n. 2.

intra penates interemptum suos...incerto caedis auctore

Seneca is aware of another tradition, that Drusus committed suicide (*De Brev. Vitae* 6.2) which seems to be related to a curious story that he had drunk goat's blood to create the impression that Caepio had poisoned him (*Vir. Ill.* 66; Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* XXXIII, 1, 20). The story was doubtless put about by the political opponents of Drusus. However the much more common verdict is that another person placed in Drusus' groin the knife which killed him. The deed was done in his own courtyard either when Drusus was returning home (Velleius II, 14; *De Vir. Ill.* 66), or after he had been conducting public business from his house (Appian *B.C.* I, 36). Although the assassin was never found the author of the *De Viris Illustribus* says that suspicion of planning the deed fell upon Caepio and the consul Philippus. Suetonius also suggests that Drusus was murdered by his opponents (*Tib.* 3, 2).

acerbam

See 9.2 *tot acerba funera* and note.

tulit...tulerat.

Seneca emphasises Cornelia's endurance by the *traiectio* of the verb *ferre,* used in two different senses.

16.5 in Scipiones Scipionumque matres ac filias.

Scipio Aemilianus may be understood as included in the example of Aemilius Paulus (13, 3-4) and Cornelia *mater Gracchi* was the daughter of Scipio Africanus Maior (16.3). Seneca has in fact mentioned no mother of a Scipio, but since he was confused about the date of the adoption of Aemilius' two sons, (see 13.3 and note), he may also have been unaware of their maternity.

infesta variis casibus...inmissum est

For a discussion of Seneca's use of military imagery, see 9.3 and note.

16.6 non tantum eripuit filios sed elegit.

Seneca puts into Marcia's mouth an objection similar to the one anticipated in 12.4 "*electam te a dis*" and based on the concept of '*invidia*' this time attributed to *fortuna*. This enables him to drive home the moral lesson of the exempla, that Marcia's sufferings are not abnormal and even the mighty have to put up with similar misfortunes.

duas filias...magna solacia

Seneca has made use of the idea of friends and relatives as '*solacia*' at 2.5 and 5.6 in dealing with the situation of Octavia and Livia and for other instances of it in Seneca's writing see note on 2.5. Although the comparison of the farmer is part of the tradition of popular philosophy (see note infra), the theme seems to belong to a poetic tradition rather than that of the more strictly philosophical consolationes. We find instances of the theme in Euripides (*fr.* 954, Nauck Ἄλλ' ἐπ' ἄλλῃ φάρμακον κεῖται νόσῳ/λυπουμένῳ μὲν μῦθος εὐμενὴς φίλων) and Menander (*fr.* 591 τῷ μὲν τὸ σῶμα διατεθειμένῳ κακῶς/χρεία 'στ' ἰατροῦ, τῷ δὲ τὴν ψυχὴν φίλου/λύπην γὰρ εὔνους οἶδε θεραπεύειν λόγος). The theme appears in the poetic *Consolatio ad Liviam* (471-4, "*est tibi sitque precor, multorum filius instar...est coniux...*). For other instances of the theme and a full discussion see Grollios (*op.cit.* pp. 67-68).

16.7 Agricola, eversis arboribus...semina statim plantasque disponit.

Teles (*Reliquiae* p. 59, 10ff. Hense) makes the same point in the comparison "οὐ γὰρ ὀρθῶς φησὶ βουλευομένου ὁ Στίλπων τὸ δία τοὺς ἀπογενομένους τῶν ζώντων ὀλιγωρεῖν· γεωργὸς οὐ ποιεῖ τοῦτο, οὐδ' ἐὰν τῶν δένδρων ξηρόν τι γένηται, καὶ τὰ ἄλλα προσεκκόπτει, ἄλλα τῶν λοιπῶν ἐπιμελόμενος πειρᾶται τὴν τοῦ ἐκλελοιπότος χρείαν ἀναπληροῦν." Twice in his letters Seneca stresses the need to make new relationships to take the place of the old, each time using imagery drawn from rural life. The difference between a man who has a friend and a man making one is like the difference between a farmer reaping and sowing, and perhaps the latter is more pleasant as Attalus had said '*quomodo artifici iucundius pingere est quam pinxisse*' (*Ep. Mor.* 9, 5-7). Likewise just as it is foolish to weep if leaves fall from a tree because they will come again next year, so friendships can be made again, even if they are not re-born (*Ep. Mor.* 104, 11). The imagery clearly attracted Seneca, for he also compared the farmer's delight in his trees to the teacher's delight in the growth of his pupils to maturity (*Ep.*

Mor. 34, 1). Part of the attraction obviously lay in Seneca's own interest in the cultivation of trees and in particular vines which repeatedly reveals itself in Seneca's later works (*N.Q.* III, 7, 1 "*ego..vinearum diligens fossor*" *Ep. Mor.* 12, 2; 104, 6; 112, 2 and M. Griffin, The Elder Seneca and Spain, *J.R.S.* 62, 1972, pp. 1-19). The advice to procure new relationships to replace those broken by death is repeated, without any agricultural comparison in *Ep. Mor.* 63, 10.

(Nam ut ad damna ita...veloxque tempus est.)

Seneca is here using some rhetorical licence to emphasise his point, straying from strict accuracy as his other writings suggest he well knew; for he says to Lucilius, "*Esset aliquod imbecillitatis nostrae solacium rerumque nostrarum si tam tarde perirent cuncta quam fiunt; nunc incrementa lente exeunt, festinatur in damnum*" (*Ep. Mor.* 91, 6) and makes the same point specifically referring both to human development and the growth and destruction of trees (*N.Q.* III, 27, 2).

16.8 nunc video...eodem modo malos bonosque iactari

Simonides had first used the theme that good and bad alike suffer at death's hands (9. Diehl)

ὁ δ' ἄφυκτος ὁμῶς ἐπικρέμαται θάνατος
κείνου γὰρ ἴσον λάχον μέρος οἵ τ' ἀγαθοὶ
ὅστις τε κακός

Here Seneca has applied the thought not to the dead man himself but to the bereaved who suffer from fortune's blows irrespective of their own goodness or badness. This might be thought to be a valid reproach against fortune, but since to a Stoic the only good was the morally good and the only evil the morally base, (*S. V.F.* I, 185; III, 51), Seneca could argue that Marcia's misfortunes imply no judgement on her morals, and that therefore she has no reason to fear that the only true evil has overtaken her. If misfortune only struck the evil, her situation would be very different and she would rightly be troubled. According to Plutarch (*Ad Apoll.* 114C), Crantor had used a similar argument "τὸ γὰρ μὴ δι' αὐτὸν κακῶς πράττειν ὁ μὲν Κράντωρ φησὶν οὐ μικρὸν εἶναι κούφισμα πρὸς τὰς τύχας."

17 At this point Seneca develops for the second time the *locus de condicione humana* indicated by the phrase "*sed humanum est*". In this development human life is compared to a journey to Syracuse. Undoubtedly the influence of the suasoria can be detected here, a genus of oratory in which "*locorum habitus fluminumque decursus et urbium situs moresque populorum*" were considered topics particularly suitable for excursive description (Sen. *Con-*

tr. II, *praef* III, and Favez, *op.cit.* LVII and LVIII). Another influence encouraging such descriptive passages was the Bionean diatribe where the aim of the moralist was to win favour for his exhortations by intermingling them with more pleasing passages (Oltramare *op.cit.* p. 15). However it would be wrong to regard this as simply a pleasant digression related only vaguely to the main theme of the consolation (with Grollios, *op.cit.* p. 55, "They bear no close relation to the main argument and destroy the balance of the whole", in similar vein Albertini, *op.cit.* p. 248 "un ornement rhetorique" and Favez, *loc.cit.*). Until this point Seneca has been dealing with Marcia's feelings and her situation, and even the *exempla* are dealing with the immediate context of an individual and his or her bereavement. In the final section of the work, 19.3-25, Seneca will be much concerned with the place of death in the world-picture and the world process and will try to involve Marcia in looking at her situation from a perspective other than her own. In the development of the *consolatio* therefore, these chapters introduce a much broader perspective on human life. Abel (*Bauformen* p. 40) rightly comments "nachdem das Ich aus seiner anmassenden Stellung im Weltmittelpunkt verdrängt ist, ist der Blick freigeworden für das wahre Verhältnis von Gut und Schlecht im Universum."

This whole section is carefully developed with the descriptions of Syracuse and of life following closely parallel patterns. A lengthy description of the advantages (17, 2-4; 18, 2-7) is followed in each case by a terse statement of the disadvantages (17, 5; 18, 8). In each description the anaphora *videbis* is used to introduce the advantages individually and the conjunction *sed* marks the transition from advantages to disadvantages.

This section of the work has attracted much attention from the textual critics. Madvig (*Adversaria Critica* Copenhagen 1871-3, II, pp. 354-5) proposes to transpose the passage from "*Dicit omnibus nobis natura*" to "*nihil certi spoponderunt*" (17. 6-7) to the beginning of the whole excursus, after "*sed humanum est*" (17.1). This transposition was supported by J. R Harris (*A.J.P.* 4, 1883, p. 77), and Albertini *op.cit.* pp. 171-173 while Gertz (*Studia Critica in Annaei Senecae dialogos* Copenhagen 1874, p. 11) proposed to transpose the passage in question to the end of the descriptions (18.9). The major ground for the transposition was that the προσωποποιία of nature interrupted the development of the two parallel descriptions. But it seems reasonable that the reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of a journey to Syracuse should be applied first to a particular situation, the choice of whether to have children, and then to life in general. Moreover Seneca's phraseology in 18.1 suggests that something has in-

tervened between this section and the end of the description of Syracuse. The phrase *totius vitae* might suggest a contrast with the part of life to which the image of the Syracusan journey has already been applied, and Seneca's second sentence "*An Syracusas viseres...exposui*" would have been unnecessary had Seneca only just completed his description (Abel *op.cit.* p. 176, Favez *op.cit.* pp. 58-9. Waltz, Sénèque *Dialogues,* Vol. III, Paris 1923, p. 7)

A. Uhl, (*Quaestiones criticae in L. Ann. Senecae dialogos,* Strasburg, 1899, pp. 26-7) proposed to delete the whole chapter 18 as far as "*exeundum est*" (18.8) considering it as a translation of a passage of Posidonius by Seneca which had later been interpolated into the text. While I would not deny Posidonius' influence in certain details, many of the themes are common to the whole Stoic school rather than purely Posidonian (Abel *op.cit.* 176-7) and the close parallelism of the two descriptions suggests the two were meant to lie side by side, an argument which also weighs against Reitzenstein's thesis that the different sections belong to two different Senecan redactions of the text (R. Reitzenstein, *Poimandres,* Leipzig, 1904, p. 6, see also Favez *op.cit.* pp. 60-61).

17.1 iam patri

If this is a reference to Metilius' father it is the only one in the text, and it is distinctly odd. If he were still living with Marcia we should expect him to be mentioned amongst the *solacia,* and if he were dead it is surprising that no mention is made of Marcia's reaction to this loss. If it were a question of divorce, it is difficult to see how Metilius, living under his mother's roof could be *patri praesidium* or how any reference could avoid being tactless. It is perhaps best to suppose that Seneca, discoursing on the general condition of men, is thinking more of the general situation of loss of a child than Marcia's particular position, (see Favez *op.cit.* pp. XXI-XXII).

genitus es

The use of the masculine participle points in the same direction as the note above. The three other occasions on which Seneca seems to have forgotten the sex of his addressee, *te ad omnis expositum ictus* (9.3) *formosa coniunx* (10.1) and *satiatus* (18.4) all occur in discussions '*de condicione humana*'.

17.2 quam continenti quondam cohaesisse constat.

That Sicily was once joined to Italy but was split from it by earthquake was common scientific theory in Seneca's day (Seneca *N.Q.* VI, 30, 1-3; Pliny, *N.H.* II, 204 "*avellit (natura) Siciliam Italiae*" also *ibid* III, 86 and Pomponius Mela, *De Chorographia* II, 7, 115).

Hesperium Siculo latus abscidit;

The first four feet of *Aeneid* III, 418. Seneca quotes seemingly from a slightly inaccurate memory, the whole Vergilian passage on the separation of Sicily from Italy (*Aeneid* III, 414-19) in his work on earthquakes (*N.Q.* VI, 30).

illam fabulosam Charybdin.

The first literary reference to Charybdis is in Homer, *Odyssey* XII, 104ff. and subsequently ancient literary critics placed Scylla on the Italian side of the Straits of Messina and Charybdis the whirlpool in the waters of the same Straits on the Sicilian side, and this identification was completely accepted in Seneca's day. (Vergil, *Aeneid* III, 420-423 and Servius *ad. loc.*; Ovid, *Met.* VII, 62-5; VIII, 121; XIII, 730; Strabo, *Geog.* VI, 2, 3; Pliny, *N.H.* III, 87; Pomponius Mela, *De Chor.* II, 7, 115).

stratam...quamdiu ab austro vacat

W. C. Summers (*Select Letters of Seneca*, London, 1910, p. 271) says of Charybdis "It is usually stated that Auster was the disturbing cause and so he (Seneca) himself implies in (*Ep. Mor.*) 14.8 "*ille [Auster] est qui Siculum pelagus exasperet...*" Ovid *Met.* VIII, 121 *Austro agitata Charybdis...* reads like a proverbial expression." It should be noted however that in the passage on which Summers is commenting (*Ep. Mor.* 79, 1) Seneca asks Lucilius to observe whether the sea here is stirred by one wind only, showing a willingness on his part to doubt received opinion on such matters, as in the question of Arethusa's source (below). *Stratam* at the beginning of the description of Charybdis is contrasted with *sorbentem* at the end.

navigia sorbentem

In *Ep. Mor.* 79.1 Seneca wonders whether the destructive powers of Charybdis have been overstated, for he knows that Scylla is "*saxum...non terribile navigantibus*" and asks Lucilius to investigate. The dangerous nature of Charybdis was generally accepted by scientific writers as well as poets (Strabo, *Geog.* 6, 2, 3; Pliny, *N.H.* III, 87; Pomponius Mela II, 7, 115).

17.3 celebratissimum carminibus fontem Arethusam

Amongst poetic references to Arethusa, one may cite Pindar, *Nemean* 1, 1-2; Moschus *Idyll* 6; Vergil *Ecl.* 10, 1-6; *Aeneid* III, 692-6; Ovid *Met.* V, 572-641 where the myth is fully narrated. Arethusa was situated on Ortygia, originally an island in the harbour of Syracuse, but which had for many hundreds of years been connected by a bridge to the mainland. It was one of quite a large number of springs supplying Syracuse with drink-

ing water (Pliny *N.H.* III, 89) and gave fresh water despite the fact that an artificial barrier was necessary to keep the sea out (Cic. *In Verrem* V, 118).

sive illas ibi primum...servatum reddidit

The second theory, widely held in antiquity, was that the Alpheius, a river flowing through the Peloponnese flowed beneath the sea and mingled with the waters of the spring Arethusa. As Ovid explains the myth behind it, the hunter Alpheus fell in love with the Nymph Arethusa, a huntress. She would have fallen victim to his pursuit had not Artemis protected her by enveloping her in a cloud, whisking her from Achaia to Ortygia and transforming her into a sacred spring. Alpheius however was metamorphosed into a river and pursued his love by slipping with the bulk of his waters under the sea to his love. C. A. M. Fennel comments (Pindar, *Nemean and Isthmian Odes,* Cambridge, 1883, p. 4) that the myth probably veils the transference of the cult of Artemis Potamia from Elis to Ortygia by Dorian colonists. The physical fact which the myth purported to explain was not only accepted by the poets but by many others, and supporting evidence was adduced that objects tossed into the Alpheius at Olympia appeared in the Syracusan spring (Pomponius Mela, *De Chor.* II, 7, 117; Pausanias, V, 7, 1-2; Pliny, *N.H.* II, 225).

This theory was however roundly condemned by Strabo (*Geog.* VI, 2, 4) who describes its fancied underground passage as "παντελῶς μυθῶδες". Seneca here mentions both theories, and in the *Quaestiones Naturales* (III, 26, 5-6) gives the so-called evidence for the second theory and says that Lucilius, like Vergil, had believed it. Once again he does not commit himself to the more romantic view and perhaps retained a certain healthy scepticism.

17.4 portum quietissimum omnium.

Syracuse in fact had two harbours, the *portus Lacceius* or *parvus* to the North of Ortygia island and the *portus maior* to the south. Thucydides of course distinguishes the two harbours on numerous occasions in his account of the Sicilian expedition (VI and VII) as does Cicero also (*In Verrem* IV, 117-8).

ubi Athenarum potentia fracta

Seneca here refers to the complete defeat of the Athenian expedition to Sicily 415-413. Led originally by Nicias, Alcibiades and Lamachus, and towards the end by Nicias, Eurymedon and Demosthenes, the Athenian fleet was forced to shore and captured while attempting to break out of the Great Harbour in 413 (Thucydides VII, 70-71). The army subsequently

tried to march away through Sicily but both the detachment under Demosthenes and subsequently that under Nicias were forced to surrender (*ibid.* 82-85). Though the battle in the harbour could be regarded as decisive, the anaphora *Videbis* before this phrase suggests the passage to another spectacle and it is best to see the two *ubi* clauses as parallel and equivalent in meaning both referring to the λιθοτομίαι where the captured Athenians were held prisoner. Thucydides regarded this defeat as one of the major turning-points of the Peloponnesian War, as indeed it was (*ibid.* 86-87).

nativus carcer

The λιθοτομίαι or *lautumiae* were situated on the peninsula of Achradina. Their use to safeguard the Athenian prisoners of war seems to have been their first use as a prison, and was probably only a temporary expedient, but the tyrant Dionysius I first turned them into a permanent prison (Cic. In *Verrem* V, 143) and in Cicero's day nearly 350 years later they were still in use as a prison for offenders from the whole island of Sicily (*ibid.* V, 68).

tepidissima hiberna...sine interventu solis

"*Urbem Syracusas...cuius hic situs atque haec natura esse loci caelique dicitur ut nullus umquam dies tam magna ac turbulenta tempestate fuerit quin aliquo tempore eius diei solem homines viderint.*" (Cic., *In Verrem* V. 26).

17.5 erit Dionysius illic tyrannus

The subsequent reference to exile makes it clear that the reference is to Dionysius II, tyrant of Syracuse 367/6—357/6 who was dispossessed of his Sicilian territories by Dion in 357/6 but after holding part of his Italian territories, Rhegium until 351 and Locri until 347/6, he was able to reestablish himself in Syracuse in 346. However, his opponents won the aid first of Hicetas and the Carthaginians and secondly of a Corinthian force under Timoleon to whom Dionysius surrendered himself, his army and the citadel of Syracuse in 343. Subsequently Dionysius went into exile in Corinth. (For Dionysius' accession, Di. Sic., 15, 74; Plutarch, *Dion* 6, 4-7; his overthrow by Dion, Di. Sic. 16, 9-13 and 16-18; Plut. *op.cit.* 23-33; for his restoration in 346, Plut. *Timoleon* 1; and his final expulsion Di Sic. 16, 68-70; Plutarch *op.cit.* 9.3.)

Favez quite rightly points out that the picture of Dionysius drawn here corresponds to that of the stock tyrants of the rhetorical schools (Favez *op.cit.* p. LX-LXI and Sen. *Contr.* I, 7; II, 5; III, 6; IV, 7; V, 8; VII, 6; IX, 4) but it is also true that Dionysius and his fate had become part of the exemplary tradition of the rhetors (Plut. *Dion* 50, Val. Max. VI, 9, *ext.* 6)

and that therefore his particular characteristics had contributed to the making of the stock 'tyrant' of the declaimers. Certainly none of the subsequent description is inaccurate in its characterisation of the Sicilian tyrant.

dominationis cupidus etiam post Platonem

Plato twice visited the court of Dionysius II, shortly after his accession at the instance of Dion, and in 361 in the hopes of effecting a reconciliation between the tyrant and Dion, now in exile. On the first of these occasions Nepos tells us that he first made an impression on the young tyrant, "*tantum...ut ei persuaserit tyrannidis facere finem libertatemque reddere Syracusanis*". This seems to have meant the changing of the constitution so that Dionysius would occupy the position of a constitutional monarch subject to the laws (Nepos *Dion* 3, also Plato, *Epist.* 3, 315 and the subsequent constitutional proposals after Dion's death, *Epist.* 8, 355-356). However the influence of Philistus and the political opponents of Dion prevented such changes and subsequently Dionysius' rule deteriorated (Nepos, *loc.cit.*).

vitae post exilium

The widely accepted tradition is that he spent his time in Corinth, his place of exile, teaching schoolchildren (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* III, 27; Val. Max., *Fact. et Dict.* VI, 9, *Ext.* 6; Ammianus Marcellinus, XIV, 11, 30), but it is possible that this is an extension of the view that he was himself an object lesson of the mutability of fortune (Di. Sic. XVI, 70, 3 and Plutarch, *Dion* 50; *Timoleon* 14). The derogatory reference to Dionysius' life in exile may refer to the stupidity of his amusements to avoid stirring the fear of the Corinthians (Plutarch *Tim.* 14) but it is more likely that while portraying him as one of the evils of Syracuse, Seneca takes the opportunity to contrast his meanness of spirit in clinging to life with the '*magnitudo animi*' of subsequent exemplars, such as Cremutius Cordus and Cato, who have preferred death to humiliation.

accerset ad libidinem...binis coire

This description of Sicilian court life probably stems from Plato's denunciation of the court of Dionysius I for its gluttony and sexual licence (*Epist.* 7, 326b) which made a great impression on subsequent writers (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* V, 100; *De Fin.* II, 92). However the court of the younger Dionysius seems to have been little different. Plutarch for example, (*Dion.* 7) includes an account of a drinking bout which lasted ninety days.

17.6 Dicit omnibus nobis natura

Seneca here uses the rhetorical device of προσωποποιία or '*conformatio*' as he does later in the *peroratio* of the work. Lucretius' personification of

nature (*D.R.N.* III, 931ff.) is often cited as a literary parallel for this passage (Grollios, *op.cit.* p. 56; D. N. G. Reid, *op.cit.* p. 131, with some interesting comment on other Senecan προσωποποιίαι). The device was regularly used to allow mute objects to speak and was considered particularly useful in grand descriptions. Its use in Latin literature was wide and goes back as far as Ennius (*Rhetorica Ad Herennium* IV 52, 65; Quint. *Inst. Or.* IX, 2, 27-36). The προσωποποιία itself is built up of pairs of contrasted situations, reaching a climax with the particular situation with which the work is concerned, the demise of the son before the parent.

17.7 illos tibi suprema...a liberis tuis.

The Romans, like other ancient peoples, seem to have considered it a matter of importance to have their funerals conducted and their eulogies pronounced by their children. This is suggested not only by their sentiment that for parents to bury children was a reversal of nature, (Plutarch, *Cons. ad Apoll.* 119f, and Buecheler, *C.E.L.* 556 and 819) but by the feeling expressed by children who regarded their performance of these rites to a parent as a clear duty (Buecheler, *C.E.L.* 380 "*Eutychis, ut par est, tribuit tibi natus honorem*" see Lier, *op.cit.*, pp. 458-9). Among occurrences of the theme in Roman literature is Cicero, *De Sen.* 84.

nullum non acerbum funus est

See note on 9.2 *tot acerba funera.*

18.2 urbem dis hominibusque communem

Right at the beginning of his world-picture Seneca makes its Stoic base clear. The definition goes back to the time of Chrysippus when the world was defined as "*quasi communem urbem et civitatem hominum et deorum*" (Cic. *De Fin.* III, 64 = *S. V.F.* III, 333; also *De Republic.* I, 19 = *S. V.F.* III, 338). Posidonius used a similar definition (D.L. VII, 138), and Seneca is fond of the image (cf. *De Otio* 4.1). Closely linked with this concept was the idea that all men were brothers, a theme which is only fully developed among the later Stoics, (cf. H. C. Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought*, Cambridge 1965, pp. 152-66, 177-194).

certis legibus aeternisque devinctam

Seneca here again makes the Stoic basis of his world picture clear by his reference to the Stoic laws of fate fixed forever. (See notes and references on 6.2 *si sors immota et in aeternum fixa...*)

a fraternis occursibus...lumen mutuantem

Seneca is here following the usual teaching of the Stoics who held correctly that the moon borrowed her light from the sun (*D.L.* VII, 145). The

Greeks first recognised this in the fifth century, and although it is sometimes claimed that this explanation is found in the work of Parmenides (on the basis of *fr.* 14), it is perhaps better to follow Plato (*Crat.* 409) in assigning its first exposition amongst the Greeks to Anaxagoras. (On this question, see W. K. C. Guthrie, *A History of Greek Philosophy* I, Cambridge 1962, p. 94, n. 2 and pp. 286ff.) The writers of late antiquity liked to attribute this discovery to yet earlier pre-Socratics, even to Thales (e.g. Aetius II, 28, 5) but their evidence cannot be accepted (Guthrie, *loc.cit.*). The Epicureans true to their doctrine of "οὐκ ἀντιμαρτύρησις", held that this was one of a number of possible explanations of the source of the moon's light (Lucr. *D.R.N.* V, 705-14). *fraternis* is an allusion to the mythological relationship of Phoebus Apollo, the sun-god and Phoebe, or Diana, goddess of the moon which was a literary commonplace (Vergil *Georgics* I, 396-7).

18.3 quinque sidera...nitentia

The ancients recognised five planets, Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Venus and Mercury, known to the Greeks by the fifth century B.C. and distinguished from the fixed stars as in the system of the Pythagorean Philolaus. The diurnal rotation of the sky is from East to West and the planets are observed to participate in this. But during the course of their apparent circling of the zodiac, they move gradually eastwards and assume a more easterly starting point on each diurnal rotation. They are thus described as "striving in the opposite direction to the speeding cosmos."

Plato refers to this contrary motion of the planets, sun and moon in the myth of Er (*Rep.* 617A) and in the *Timaeus* (36C) talks of the differing motions of the same and the other. This motion is also described by Cicero in his account of the heavens which he puts into the mouth of Scipio Africanus (*De Rep.* VI, 17 "*cui subiecti sunt septem qui versantur retro contrario motu atque caelum*") and by the Stoic poet Manilius (*Astronomicon* I, 258-9 "*solemque alternis vicibus per tempora portant/atque alia adverso luctantia sidera mundo*).

ex horum levissimis motibus... sidus incessit

In the first century A.D. a distinction was usually made between the Stoic view of providence and the theories of the astrologers (Tac. *Ann.* VI, 22). Nevertheless the Stoic doctrine of συμπάθεια τῶν ὅλων made it natural to allow that what occurred in one part of the universe influenced other parts. According to Cicero, (*De Div.* II, 42, 88) Panaetius alone of the Stoics rejected astrological prediction entirely, although not all Stoics would have allowed astrology such extensive claims as this. Diogenes of

Babylon, for example permitted the position of the stars at birth to determine the nature and aptitudes of a person, but no more. Seneca however frequently attributes wide-ranging powers to the stars (cf. 21, 6 "*habebit quisque quantum illi dies primus adscripsit.*" See also *De Prov.* 5, 7 "*quantum cuique temporis restat prima nascentium hora disposuit;*" *N.Q.* 7, 28; *De Ben.* IV, 23, 3-4). He was probably influenced in this by Posidonius who wrote five books on the subject of divination, and was according to Augustine "*multum astrologiae deditus*" (*De Civ. Dei* V, 2).

18.4 Satiatus: for the use of the masculine participle, see note on 9.3 *expositum.*

et ex uno fonte...diffusi amnes

Favez (*op.cit.* p. 63) sees in this phrase an allusion to the idea that all rivers have a common subterranean source. This idea is found in Plato (*Phaedo* 112Aff.) and Vergil (*Georg.* IV, 363-73) though in both cases the pictures of this vast underground lake form part of a myth. However it is clear that some held this doctrine as serious scientific teaching (Sen. *N.Q.* III, 8). Nevertheless Seneca mentions it there only as one of a number of theories about the source of rivers and expresses neither support for nor opposition to it, so that this idea may not be in his mind here. In this excursus he has been concentrating on things which are readily visible, rather than hidden causes of things, and hence may be thinking rather of two rivers flowing in opposite directions from the same source.

18.6 inter rapidorum torrentium aurum harenas interfluens

Pliny (*N.H.* XXXIII, 66) mentions the Tagus, the Po, the Hebrus, the Pactolus and the Ganges, and adds that gold derived from this source is the most perfect, being thoroughly polished by the rubbing of stone against stone.

vinculum terrarum oceanus, continuationem gentium triplici sinu scindens

Despite *Medea* 375-6 "*Oceanus vincula rerum laxet*" *vinculum* is best taken as a nominative; cf. Sen. *Suas.* 1.2 "*pelagus, totius orbis vinculum terrarumque custodia*" and *ibid.* 1.4 "*de Oceano tamen dubitant utrumne terras velut vinculum circumfluat.*" To begin the *membrum* with an accusative after *scindens* would create too much imbalance. The Geographical picture is of the lands of the Northern Hemisphere as a massive island surrounded by the sea which has three mighty inlets. The idea of the lands completely surrounded by ocean was commonly accepted (Pomponius Mela, *De Chor.* 1.4; Aulus Gellius, *Noct. Att.* XII, 13, 20) although it was more common to suggest

that there were four inlets (cf. Mela *De Chor.* 1, 5) identified by Macrobius (*Comm. in Somn. Scip.* II, 9, 7) as the Mediterranean, the Caspian Sea, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean.

18.7 excedenti terrestria magnitudine animalia

animalia is object of *videbis* and subject to *innare,* while *terrestria* (sc. animalia) is object to *excedenti.* "animals surpassing those on land in size".

alieno se magisterio moventia

Seneca here refers to the theory that some whales were guided in their movements by the *musculus marinus,* a small toothless sea-creature which acted as the whale's eyes. (Pliny *N.H.* IX, 186; XI, 165.)

quaedam haurientia undas...efflantia

The sperm-whale or *physeter* was known to the Romans as the largest creature in the Bay of Biscay. Pliny the Elder (*N.H.* IX, 8) also describes the danger it causes to shipping "*ingentis columnae modo se attollens altiorque navium velis diluviem quandam eructans.*"

nihil humanae audaciae intemptatum;

Perhaps a reminiscence of Horace *Odes* 1, 3, 25-26 and 37, "*audax omnia perpeti gens humana*" and "*nil mortalibus ardui est*".

alias quae vitam...regant

The division of 'artes' here corresponds to three of the four classes of skills attributed to Posidonius in *Ep. Mor.* 88, 21-23. The first class "*quae...instruant*" are the skills of the artisan, which are in Posidonius' scheme "*ad instruendam vitam occupatae*", the second "*quae ornent*" to the arts generally known as "liberal" though Posidonius would deny the title, and the third group of *artes* are those of the philosopher.

18.8 respondebis...ut convenit

This passage has caused the commentators a good deal of trouble, (see Favez, *op.cit.* p. 67) but Viansino provides a clue to the interpretation (*Seneca, Dialogorum libri VI, XI and XII,* Torino 1963, p. 40) with his comment on the sentence *immo...doles* "at Seneca ironice loquitur". Seneca has put before Marcia life's advantages and disadvantages, and she is in the position of one outside deciding whether to take life or not. She is now at the point of decision, and Seneca says "You will reply that you wish to live: why not?" *immo* then introduces a corrective statement (*O.L.D.* p. 836 *immo* a.) to which *puto,* "I do suppose" adds an ironic tone (cf. Ovid *Amores* III, 7, 2 and Lewis and Short p. 1495) "No, I do suppose you will not take hold of life, although the loss of part of it causes you grief." Hav-

ing thus undermined by irony the case against deciding to live he can then proceed to the exhortation "Live then as is fitting". The major point of the argument is that if one part of her life, her relationship with her son was so wonderful than its loss caused Marcia such grief, the whole of life is a possession much more to be prized, and Marcia should be grateful for the goods she possesses.

'nemo' inquis 'nos consuluit'

This is a perfectly valid objection, but if it were allowed to stand it would completely nullify the effect of the preceding excursus, hence the extraordinarily inadequate attempt at rebuttal.

19.1 Sed, ut ad solacia veniam

After winning Marcia's assent to the general proposition that life, on the terms nature gives it, is worthwhile, Seneca returns to her particular situation which had occupied his thoughts in the closing sections of chapter 16.

absentis enim afuturosque...non flemus

This stands in contrast to what Seneca says at 7.1, "*Nam discessu non solum amissione carissimorum necessarius morsus est et firmissimorum quoque animorum contractio.*" His earlier attitude is in fact the one more commonly found in Seneca, for he writes to Lucilius that his departure for Sicily produced in him a '*desiderium*' eased by Lucilius' letters and stirred up by places where the two men had last met. (*Ep. Mor.* 40, 1; 49, 1). Seneca's estimation of the feelings aroused by absence is in both cases in the *Ad Marciam* determined by the major argument the description of those feelings is designed to support. At 7.1, where Seneca is putting the moderate view that grief is natural and permissible if kept within reasonable bounds, he can support his case by suggesting that even separation from living friends causes a pang. Where, however he is arguing, as here, that Marcia should stop grieving, it is a better support for his argument to contrast the comparative ease with which we accept separation by distance and the extravagance of feeling which accompanies separation by death, though in both cases we are deprived of the social intercourse we have previously enjoyed. Seneca makes a similar comparison of death and separation from the living by absence in consoling Lucilius (*Ep. Mor.* 63, 8).

Opinio est ergo...

For the origin of the idea that grief is caused by '*opinio*' and Seneca's use of it, see 7.1 and note.

Dimisimus illos immo consecuturi praemisimus.

As Favez rightly points out (*op.cit.* p. 68) Christian Latin writers frequently use this sort of terminology, (cf. Ambrose, *De Excessu Fratris* I, 71 "*non enim amitti sed praemitti videntur quos non adsumptura mors, sed aeternitas receptura est.*") but always in the context of a belief in immortality. Though ancient writers of consolations often used this phraseology against such a background (as Cic., *De Sen.* 84; Sen., *Ad Polyb.* 9.9; and with hesitation in *Ep. Mor.* 63, 16), this is not always the case, and both Plutarch (*Ad Apoll.* 113c) and Seneca (*Ep. Mor.* 93, 12; 99, 7) use phrases such as *quem putas perisse praemissus est*" where the implication is no more than "all men must die". Seneca's statement at this point also cannot be made to signify more.

19.2 Movet et illud lugentem "...vindicet"

Such a complaint, if somewhat selfish, was not unusual. A Numidian epitaph records the laments of a father on the death of his son "*quod nondum frunitus XVI annos/ deperit et perdit orbatque patrem baculo destituta senecta.*" (Buecheler, *C.E.L.* 526, 7-9).

minime probabili

"unworthy of approval".

plus gratiae orbitas confert.

Seneca here alludes to the activities of the legacy-hunters who courted the wealthy and childless with gifts in the hope of profiting from their wills. Cicero is the first Roman writer to allude to their activities (*Parad. Stoic.* 39 and 43) which he claims show the degree of servitude to which desire for possessions reduces a man. From then on the theme became popular with the satirists who depict the various artifices by which the '*captatores*' seek to win favour, and the guile by which the recipients of their attentions ensure their continued favours while cheating them of their hopes. (Horace, *Sat.* II, 5; Juvenal, *Sat.* III, 126-30, XII, 98-102, 111-127; Martial, *Epig.* 5, 39; 6, 63; 8, 27; 9, 100, 1-4; 10, 97; 11, 67; Petronius, *Satyricon* 124 and 141). The theme became popular in a number of contexts which favoured moralising. Tacitus alludes to it in *Dial.* 6, where he suggests that a good orator is courted for the services he can offer rather than simply for hopes of future bequests. Seneca likewise makes frequent references to the practice, contrasting the motives of the *captatores* with those of true friends and pointing out the turpitude of their real wishes (*De Ben.* 4, 20, 3; 6, 38, 4). He likes to use his wit to portray their frustrations (*Brev. Vit.* 8, 7 *Const. Sap.* 9, 6) and contrasts the false goods they covet with the true wealth philosophy offers.

We cannot doubt the existence of the practice, despite its literary elaboration in the early empire. The practice must have occurred to a limited degree in every generation, (cf. Plautus, *Miles Gloriosus* 705ff., and P. Lejay, *op.cit.* pp. 481-2) and from the time of Gaius onwards, the emperor could be regarded as the most skilful practitioner of the art, using his imperial authority to enforce gratitude in the form of bequests (Suet., *Gaius* 38, 2; Tac., *Ann.* 16, 11 and M. Griffin, *Seneca, a philosopher in politics,* Oxford 1976, pp. 313-4). Nevertheless this unworthy consolation can have had no relevance to Marcia's position, since she had two surviving daughters and surviving grandchildren (16.7).

19.3 non movent me...praeter ipsum vacat

The imagined interjection of Marcia, assuring her of Seneca's good judgement of her, enables Seneca to pass neatly from the first to the second part of the argument outlined in 12.1 *Dolor tuus...utrum sua spectat incommoda an eius qui decessit.* The view that grief on one's own account was without justification was common in consolatory writing of the time. Plutarch says exactly the same thing to Apollonius (*Ad Apoll.* 111e-f), and Seneca urges Polybius to consider whether his grief is for his own sake or that of his deceased brother, arguing that if it is for his own sake it has lost all excuse. As here, the passage of the *Ad Polybium* (9.1) serves as an introduction to a discussion of the fate of the deceased.

19.4 utrum quod filius tuus decessit an quod non diu vixit.

Here Seneca outlines the formal rhetorical divisions under which he will deal with Metilius' situation, passing from the first to the second subject with Marcia's imagined interjection, "*Nimis tamen cito periit et immaturus*" (21.1). Despite this division, however, the subject of this part of a consolation 'the lot of the departed' and the traditions of the genre imposed another division of the subject matter. In the *Apology,* (40C) Plato had put into Socrates' mouth the following argument "δυοῖν γὰρ θάτερόν ἐστιν τὸ τεθνάναι· ἢ γὰρ οἷον μηδὲν εἶναι μηδὲ αἴσθησιν μηδεμίαν μηδενὸς ἔχειν τὸν τεθνεῶτα, ἢ κατὰ τὰ λεγόμενα μεταβολή τις τυγχάνει οὖσα καὶ μετοίκησις τῇ ψυχῇ τοῦ τόπου τοῦ ἐνθένδε εἰς ἄλλον τόπον." From this one can argue with Socrates, that if death is a permanent dreamless sleep then we have few better times than this, or with later writers that the sleeper, being free of all wants, is not to be pitied, and that if death is transference to a better place, then this transference is a great blessing (*Apology* 40Dff). Alongside the rhetorical division of the subject-matter therefore, there is also a philosophic division in the first half of which it is assumed that death involves complete annihilation and arguments with an Epicurean flavour

are brought forward, while in the second section (23.1ff.) death is regarded as the transference of the best part of man, his soul, to a better place, and the consequences of that view are made clear to Marcia. The overlapping rhetorical and philosophic divisions of the section 19.4-25.3 can thus be summarised in the following diagram.

Rhetorical Structure	*Philosophic Structure in terms of the Socratic Dilemma*
a) 19.4-20.6. Do you grieve because Metilius died?	a) 19.4-22.7. Epicurean attitude to death, combined with theme of *opportunitas mortis* at 20, 4-6 and 22.
b) 21.1-25.3 or because he died too soon?	b) 23.1-25.3. Description of Stoico-Platonic afterlife (23.1-2, 24.5-25.3) framing *laus mortui* (23.3-24.4).

This overlapping of structures is very much part of Seneca's style of writing, and it is a mark of his skill that the reader notices no tension between these two approaches. J. R. G. Wright (in C. D. N. Costa, *op.cit* pp. 56-57) argues for overlapping rhetorical and philosophic structures in *De Ira* I.

The Socratic dilemma was widely used by writers of consolationes both of the philosophic and of the more informal kind. Cicero, for example, in his letter to Titius, writes (*Ad Fam.* V, 16, 4 "...*saepissime et legi et audivi nihil mali esse in morte; in qua si resideat sensus, immortalitas illa potius quam mors ducenda sit; sin sit amissus nulla videri miseria debeat quae non sentiatur*". He puts the argument in similar terms into the mouth of his elder Cato (*De Sen.* 66-7) and in the first book of the *Tusculan Disputations* where he attempts to show that death is not an evil, having argued for a large part of the work in favour of Platonic arguments for the immortality of the soul, he nevertheless feels it necessary to show that if the soul perishes with the body, then death is still no evil. (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 81ff.) Seneca likewise makes frequent use of the dilemma form of argument, both in consoling Polybius, (*Ad Polyb.* 9, 2-3) and in encouraging Lucilius not to think of death as an evil. (*Ep. Mor.* 71, 16 "*magnus animus deo pareat et quidquid lex universi iubet sine cunctatione patiatur: aut in meliorem emittitur vitam, lucidius tranquilliusque inter divina mansurus aut certe sine ullo futurus incommodo, si naturae remiscebitur et revertetur in totum.* See also *Ep. Mor.* 65, 24 and *De Prov.* 6.6). Favez has pointed out that there is a seeming inconsistency in the *Ad Marciam* as the two possibilities are not put in the form of a dilemma but simply juxtapos-

ed (*op.cit.* pp. XXXVIII-XXXIX). However, both he and P. Benoit (*Les idées de Sénèque sur l'au-delà, Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques,* 32, 1948, pp. 38-51 esp. p. 41) realised that in putting these incompatible alternatives Seneca was simply conforming to an established consolatory tradition whereby the writer was expected to show that whether the soul survived the death of the body or not, the deceased suffered no harm. R. Kassel (*op.cit.* pp. 43-44 and 47-48) has further shown that both the rhetorical rules developed for writing in the consolatory genre, and the practice of philosophers from the first century B.C. on—and probably before—of using for consolatory purposes arguments drawn from a wide range of philosophic backgrounds could easily lead to the use of mutually inconsistent arguments, as for example in the attitude to the emotions.

semper enim scisti moriturum

Once again we are back to the theme 'all men must die'; see 11.1 "*mortalis nata es mortalesque peperisti*" and note *ad loc.* In this form, the argument, commended by the Cyrenaics, recalls the sayings of Anaxagoras '*Sciebam me genuisse mortalem*' and Ennius' Telamon "*Ego cum genui, tum morituros scivi*" (quoted in Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* III, 13, 28 and 24, 58). K. Buresch (*Consolationum a Graecis Romanisque scriptorum historia critica, Leipzig. Studien zur Class. Phil.* 9, pp. 47-9) suggested that the references to Anaxagoras and Telamon were to be found in Crantor. He cites in support of this theory Jerome (*Ep.* 60, 5) "*ubi illud ab infantia studium litterarum et Anaxagorae ac Telamonis semper laudata sententia: "Sciebam me genuisse mortalem?" Legimus Crantorem cuius volumen ad confovendum dolorem secutus est Cicero, Platonis, Diogenis, Clitomachi, Carneadis, Posidonii ad sedandos luctus opuscula percurrimus...*" Although it is true that there was an overlap between Cicero's *Consolatio* and the material of *Tusculan Disputations* I, there is no proof that Cicero was following Crantor at the time he quoted Anaxagoras and Ennius' Telamon, since Jerome is simply retailing generally the pagan sources he might have used in composing a *consolatio.* Any attempt therefore to attribute this argument to Crantor must remain conjectural.

Cogita nullis defunctum malis adfici

Almost all philosophic schools of the first century rejected the traditional picture of the underworld and its punishments which Seneca proceeds to describe and deny. For the Stoics it was impossible that the soul, being composed of fiery breath, should travel downwards (Sext. Emp, *Adv. Math.* ix, 71), and cynic preachers likewise ridiculed traditional belief "Ἔλεγε δὲ [sc. βίων] τοὺς ἐν Ἅιδου μᾶλλον ἂν κολάζεσθαι εἰ ὁλοκλήροις καὶ μὴ τετρημένοις ἀγγείοις ὑδροφόρουν (*D.L.* IV, 50 and Oltramare, *op.cit.* p.

65). Similarly in the *Tusculan Disputations* (1, 6, 11) Cicero makes his interlocutor say that there is no-one so witless as to be troubled by such phantoms. However, this concern to rebut the legend of the underworld was found strongly advanced in Epicurean writers (see Lucr. *D.R.N.* III, esp. 978-1023) and was particularly associated with them by Seneca. As he writes to Lucilius (*Ep. Mor.* 24.18) "*Non sum tam ineptus ut Epicuream cantilenam hoc loco persequar et dicam vanos esse inferorum metus, nec Ixionem rota volvi...*" Although a denial of the underworld was not always associated with the Epicurean view of death in Seneca, the argument in 19.5 shows clearly that the two are linked in this case.

nec tribunalia...ullos iterum tyrannos

In the traditional picture of the underworld to which the Epicureans were so opposed the souls of the newly deceased were judged by one of the judges, Aeacus, Minos and Rhadamanthus, to whom Plato (*Apol.* 41A) adds Triptolemus. The first three are in Greek mythology all sons of Jupiter, and rulers (*tyranni*) when dwelling among men, Aeacus in Aegina, Minos and Rhadamanthus in Crete, and were rewarded for their justice by being made judges of the dead. In the *Apocolocyntosis* (14.2) Seneca pictures Claudius before the tribunal of Aeacus.

luserunt ista poetae...terroribus

From the time of Plato onwards, philosophers had accused poets of encouraging false opinions and inappropriate behaviour (see *Republic* X, 603E-605A, 606E-607A). In the Roman period the two errors the poets were most commonly accused of fostering were those of portraying the Gods in a way unworthy of them which tended to afford protection to human vice (Sen., *De Ben.* VII, 23; *Brev. Vit.* 16, 5; *Vit. Beat.* 26.6) and of describing the underworld in such a way as to excite unnecessarily the fears of mankind, the accusation made in this passage. Cicero makes the same charge "*quam...opinionem magni errores consecuti sunt, quos auxerunt poetae.*" (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 16, 36), a charge repeated by Seneca (here and in *Ep. Mor.* 82, 15-16). The Stoics often tried to allegorise such legends and when they did so were criticised from an Academic standpoint for giving too much weight to the poets (Cic., *De Nat. De.*, III, 91).

19.5 Mors dolorum omnium exolutio est et finis ultra quem mala nostra non exeunt

Seneca continues the exposition of the Epicurean argument that death, being the end of all sensation, is the end of all suffering. As Epicurus had said (*Fr.* 340 Usener) "τὰς δὲ ψυχὰς τῶν ἀνθρώπων λύεσθαι ἅμα τοῖς σώμασιν

ὥσπερ καὶ συγγενᾶσθαι αὐτοῖς..." (For similar statements of the Epicurean viewpoint see Epicurus *ΚΔ* ii πρὸς Μενοικέα, 124, "στέρησις δὲ ἐστιν αἰσθήσεως ὁ θάνατος." Cic. *De Fin.* II, 100.)

quae...in qua antequam nasceremur iacuimus reponit

The comparison of the state of death to that existing before birth goes back to Euripides (*Troad.* 636 "τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι τῷ θανεῖν ἴσον λέγω") and was subsequently used by Hyperides (see Lier *op.cit.* p. 594) and Teles (*Reliquiae* ed. Hense p. 61, 2-4) but it was particularly favoured by the Epicureans as a description which could dispel the fear of death

et velut anteacto nil tempore sensimus aegri
ad confligendum venientibus undique Poenis...
sic ubi non erimus...
scilicet haud nobis quicquam qui non erimus tum
accidere omnino poterit sensumque movere
non si terra mari miscebitur et mare caelo

(Lucr. *D.R.N.* III, 832-3, 838, 840-42)

Similar comparisons are found elsewhere in Lucretius (*D.R.N.* III, 972-77) and in Cicero's exposition of Epicurean doctrine (*De Fin.* I, 49). Seneca finds this way of looking at death useful, both in putting this side of the Socratic dilemma (See *supra*), as here, and in the *Ad Polybium* (9.2) and also in giving support when he feels more drawn by the Epicurean view of death as annihilation than by those schools which postulated the survival of the soul (*Ep. Mor.* 54, 4-5; *Troades* 407-8) or when he simply wishes to suggest that death can and should be faced with resolution (*Ep. Mor.* 77, 11).

Mors nec bonum nec malum est

Seneca's argument at this point is Epicurean, namely that death being *nihil* nothing, it can be regarded as neither good nor bad. However his form of expression is strongly reminiscent of the Stoics who classed death amongst ἀδιάφορα, things indifferent, since it bore no relation to the sole *bonum* virtue, or the sole *malum*, the morally base (*S.V.F.* I, 190; III, 117; III, 127; and for a discussion of this classification amongst the Stoics, René Hoven, *op.cit.* p. 43). A similar linguistic usage is found in a clearly Stoic context in Seneca's letters to Lucilius. (*Ep. Mor.* 82.10, "*tamquam indifferentia esse dico (id est nec bona nec mala) morbum, dolorem, paupertatem, exilium, mortem.*")

19.6 Excessit filius tuus terminos intra quos servitur

The description of death as a liberator from the trials and tribulations of life, which proceeds until 20.3 is a theme recommended by Menander for

writers in the consolatory genre. The would-be comforter should argue "καὶ ὅτι βελτίων ἐστὶ τάχα ἡ μετάστασις τοῦ τῇδε βίου, ἀπαλλάττουσα πραγμάτων ἀδίκων, πλεονεξίας, ἀδίκου τύχης...ἐξέφυγε τὰ μιαρὰ τοῦ βίου" (περὶ παραμυθητικοῦ in Spengel, *Rhet. Graec.* III, 414, 8ff.). In Latin literature the idea that death releases from servitude goes back to Accius, whose Cassandra says "*Scibam hanc mihi supremam lucem et serviti finem dari*" (in Warmington, *R.O.L.* II, 243). Seneca makes use of this argument widely in consolatory contexts, particularly when putting the first part of the Socratic dilemma (*Ad Polyb.* 9.4), or when defending the Stoic view that suicide was justifiable when life contained a seemingly permanent preponderance of ἀποπροηγμένα over προηγμένα (*Ep. Mor.* 70, 14-16, 19-21 where Seneca delights in showing that even the lowest class of person can find a way of escape). Another lengthy excursus on life as slavery can be found in *Tranq. Animi* (10.3).

verecundae aures

We may notice how Seneca inserts a winning reference to Metilius' modesty.

20 Seneca's lengthy eulogy of the benefits conferred by death is constructed with great care and rhetorical skill. The first carefully balanced period consists of an exclamation and relative clause of which *mors* is the subject. *mors* is then modified by five *sive* clauses, and the sentence finishes with three nouns in apposition to *mors* each accompanied by a dative, with the tricolon balanced by a participial phrase. The second paragraph depends on the *repetitio* of *haec* at the beginning of a series of varied sentences the final sentence involving two relative noun clauses as predicate to *haec,* the first containing one, the second two, final clauses. In the third paragraph the verb *video* is repeated and the passage ends with *contentio,* the rhetorical antithesis of *vita* and *mors* in the phrase '*caram te, vita, beneficio mortis habeo*'. For other passages in which Seneca eulogises death see 19.6 and note and *Ep. Mor.* 91, 21.

20.2 infra quos

Literally 'beneath what peoples' although in English we would naturally say 'under what soil'. *Infra quos* the reading of R., though giving obvious sense, as opposed to the readings of A and V '*infra quod*' is still as unusual as it would be for us to use the phrase 'beneath whom' someone was buried. Nevertheless such a vivid pictorial method of expression is in keeping with Seneca's style.

haec...exaequat omnia

For the theme of death the leveller, see 11.2 and note. Though the theme clearly had its appeal for Seneca himself, the thought that it was particularly appropriate in dealing with a member of a family which had suffered from the hostility of the powers that be may have influenced him to repeat it.

20.3 membris singulis articulis singula †docuerunt† machinamenta

The text at this point bristles with difficulties. The transition from a first person singular to a third person plural verb is in any case harsh, and it is impossible to arrive at a satisfactory meaning for *docuerunt.* The complete deletion of the word, as envisaged by Muretus, is an attractive possibility, leaving *machinamenta* as object of *video.* If the insertion of a non-existent verb is thought to be paleographically unlikely, then *nocuerunt* with *machinamenta* as subject, as envisaged Madvig and Gertz, is plausible. The phrase *membris singulis articulis* without any co-ordinating conjunction is also puzzling. Waltz (*op.cit.* p. 9) suggested, probably rightly, that *membris* is a gloss on *articulis,* citing as a parallel *Ep. Mor* 24.14 "*singulis articulis singula machinamenta...aptata.* It should be noted that the instruments of torture here described are most likely to be applied to slaves rather than a person of Marcia's social status, and in his most substantial treatment of suicide (*Ep. Mor.* 70) Seneca is particularly appreciative of the way in which such people have found in suicide escape from life's indignities.

licet uno gradu ad libertatem transire.

Seneca is here expressly referring to suicide as a way of escape. For the Stoics, in certain circumstances suicide was permissible for, or even incumbent upon, the *sapiens* (*S. V.F.* III, 757-768). This was only, of course, after a rational judgement of circumstance had been made, but in such circumstances Seneca repeatedly sees in the *rationalis e vita exitus* a pathway to liberty (*Ep. Mor.* 70; *De Ira* III, 15, 4 where any method of suicide can be justified in order to escape from a tyrant's clutches). The manner of death of Marcia's father (cf. 1, 2-4; 22, 4-7) must make this assessment of death's advantages attractive not only to Seneca but also to his addressee.

20.4 quam multis diutius vixisse nocuerit

Seneca here introduces three examples of men who might have been thought more fortunate had they died earlier, Pompey, Cicero and Cato. Favez (*op.cit.* p. L) argues that they would be better placed later in chapters 21-22, the second subsection announced in the divisio at 19.4 "*utrum quod filius tuus decessit, an quod non diu vixisset?*" but the argument

that death rescues men from life's evils finds a natural place in the first subsection, and it is an easy transition to examples of those who suffered by living longer, and hence provides an ideal transition to the arguments on the second point introduced at 21.1. The circumstances surrounding the deaths of Pompey and Cicero quickly became stock themes of the declaimers, (for Pompey see Quint., *Inst. Or.* 3, 8, 33; 3, 8, 55-7, and for Cicero see Sen. *Suasoriae* 6 and 7) while Cato very soon became the central figure in Roman Stoic martyrology. (Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 24, 6 "*'Decantatae', inquis 'in omnibus scholis fabulae istae sunt; iam mihi cum ad contemnendam mortem ventum fuerit, Catonem narrabis'.*") The examples of Pompey, Cicero and Cato are all found in the first book of Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations,* the first two illustrating exactly the same point that Seneca is making here, and Pompey's in almost exactly the same form (Pompey, Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* I, 86; Cicero *ibid.* I, 84; Cato, *ibid.* I, 74). Seneca is here drawing on a well-established tradition.

Gnaeum Pompeium, decus istud firmamentumque imperii

The wretched circumstances of Pompey's death seem to have secured for him even amongst the victors of civil war an almost immediate rehabilitation of his reputation. Within a month of his death Cicero wrote to Atticus of him "*integrum et castum et gravem cognovi*" (*Ad Att.* XI, 6, 5) and under Augustus Livy was subject to no pressure when he praised Pompey lavishly (Tac., *Ann.* IV, 34).

Neapoli valetudo

Pompey was gravely ill at Naples in 50 B.C. but recovered after many Italian cities had offered prayers and vows for his recovery (Cic., *Tusc. Disp.* I, 86; Velleius, II, 48, 2; Juvenal, *Sat.* X, 283-8). The dating of Appian who places the sickness firmly in the events of 50 B.C. (*B.C.* II, 28) is to be preferred to the somewhat vague reference of Velleius (*loc.cit.*) "*ante biennium quam ad arma itum est*" where "*ad arma*" could allude either to Caesar's declaration of war in 49 B.C. or the final conflict at Pharsalia in 48. After Seneca, Juvenal uses Pompey as an exemplum in exactly this form (*loc.cit.*) and Lucan alludes to it in his description of Pompey's flight from Pharsalus (*B.C.* VIII, 27-31).

exigui temporis adiectio

Pompey's death occurred only two years later.

legiones in conspectu...prima acies senatus fuit

Seneca here refers to the battle of Pharsalus, 9th August 48 B.C. Pompey's forces suffered complete rout, and according to Caesar (*B.C.*

III, 99) 15,000 Pompeian troops were killed, although Asinius Pollio who served on Caesar's side in the battle put the number at 6,000 (Appian *B.C.* II, 82). Appian also records (*loc.cit.*) that ten senators were killed fighting on Pompey's side. Both Lucan and Plutarch refer to noble support for Pompey and their pressure on him to commit himself to a decisive battle (Lucan *B.C.* VII, 47-61; and his commanders, *ibid.* 217-223; Appian *B.C.* II, 67; Plutarch, *Pompey* 67).

vidit Aegyptium carnificem.

After his defeat Pompey joined his wife Cornelia in Lesbos and proceeded to Cilicia where he held council of war. On the advice of senatorial leaders, he sailed to Egypt to seek the aid of Ptolemy XIII. He was treacherously enticed ashore and stabbed on landing by Achillas, Ptolemy's general, assisted by Septimius, a Gabinian who had once served as tribune under Pompey, 28th September 48 A.D. Numerous sources comment on the unworthiness of these executioners (Lucan, *B.C.* VIII, 675-6 "*Pharius satelles*" and "*degener miles Romane*", likewise Velleius II, 53; Cicero, *loc.cit.*), and also on the removal of Pompey's head by his assassins (Plutarch, *Pompey* 80; Appian, *B.C.* II, 86; Juvenal, *loc. cit.;* Lucan, *loc.cit.*).

sacrosanctum victoribus

Caesar wept on being shown Pompey's head and ordered that it be given proper burial (Plutarch, *Caesar* 48, 2; Lucan, *B.C.* IX, 1035ff.; Livy, *Per.* 112; Val. Max., V, 1, 10). Valerius Maximus actually uses the phrase "*caput...etiam ipsi victori miserabile.*"

quid...turpius quam Pompeium vivere beneficio regis

regis can either refer to Ptolemy XIII, 'the king', the thought being that since Ptolemy's father Auletes had been restored to his throne through Pompey's influence and Gabinius' troops, the king was Pompey's client and was an unsuitable person to have power of life and death over him, or have a more general meaning 'a king' the implication being that Pompey who had defeated Mithridates and had had kings amongst his followers at Pharsalia should be subject to the will of no king. Moreover, by the time Seneca was writing, Pompey had come to be regarded as a fighter for *libertas* and the ancestral constitution against monarchy which Caesar aimed to institute and his successors later established. It would therefore be even more inappropriate for him to be indebted to a *rex* (For Ptolemy's debt to Pompey, Velleius, *loc.cit.*; Sen., *De Tranq. An.* 16, 1; Plutarch, *Pompey* 76; for his more usual position in regard to Eastern kings Val. Max., *loc.cit.*).

20.5 M. Cicero si illo tempore quo Catilinae sicas devitavit...

Seneca here refers to Cicero's suppression of the Catilinarian conspiracy in his consulship, 63 B.C. Cicero's repeated boasting of his achievements proved tedious to his contemporaries (Plutarch, *Cicero* 24) but historians of a later generation saw the importance of what he had done. (Velleius, II, 34, "*consul Sergii Catilinae Lentulique et Cethegi et aliorum utriusque ordinis virorum coniurationem singulari virtute, constantia, vigilia curaque aperuit*", likewise Appian *B.C.* II, 7.). Sallust's view of Cicero is a subject of greater controversy but see R. Syme (*op.cit.* pp. 105-111.) Seneca shares the general view, "*consulatum...non sine causa sed sine fine laudatum.*" (*De Brev. Vit.* 5.1). The reference "*sicas devitavit*" is to the attempt on Cicero's life by C. Cornelius and L. Vargunteius on November 7th (Sallust, *Bell.Cat.* 28, 1-3; Cic. *In Cat.* I, 1-2; I, 9). Seneca's remark "*pariter cum patria petitus est*" is justified by the general consensus of our sources that the respublica was in danger, for example Sallust (*op.cit.* 16, 4) "*Catilina...opprimundae reipublicae consilium cepit*". The phrase "*servator eius*" refers to the scene on the evening of December 5th 63, after Lentulus, Cethegus and the other conspirators caught in the act of treason had been executed. Plutarch (*Cic.* 22) and Appian (*B.C.* II, 7) record that a crowd attended Cicero on his way home from the forum acclaiming him 'saviour' (σωτήρ) and that on Cato's initiative he was granted the title '*pater patriae*'.

si denique filiae suae funus secutus esset

Cicero's daughter Tullia died not long after childbirth in February 45. The remark that he would have died '*felix*' can only imply that events he was later to see were worse, for Cicero was grievously stricken by his bereavement, "*sed omnem consolationem vincit dolor.*" (*Ad Att.* XII, 14, 3; see also *ibid.* 15; 20; 23; 40; *Ad Fam.* IV, 6; *De Nat. De.* I, 4, 9). As far as Seneca's general point is concerned Cicero would have agreed that death would have rescued him from evils rather than drawn him from life's pleasures, "*qui et domesticis et forensibus solaciis ornamentisque privati certe, si ante occidissemus, mors nos a malis, non a bonis abstraxisset.*" (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 84.)

non vidisset strictos in civilia capita mucrones.

The phrase strikes oddly, as Tullia died in February 45, and Caesar's sword had been drawn against Pompey, 49-48 B.C., Scipio and Cato, defeated at Thapsus in 46 B.C., while preparations for the fighting against Gnaeus Pompeius, the son of Magnus, in Spain must have been well under way. One way out of the difficulty is to take the phrase '*si denique...etiam tunc*' as a parenthesis in which the main train of thought follows from '*servator eius*' to '*non vidisset*'. Favez (*op.cit.* p. 76) suggests the

reference might not be to Caesar's wars but to the fighting of 43 B.C., and to the proscriptions which followed the reconciliation of Antony and Octavian. While the phrase "*hastam consularia spolia vendentem*" could certainly apply to Caesar's actions after his victories (Cic., *De Off.* II, 27-29; *Phil.* VIII, 9) the reference "*divisa percussoribus occisorum bona*" and "*caedes*" perhaps apply more easily to the horrors of the proscriptions, (for a list see Appian, *B.C.* IV, 12-30). Nevertheless to overlook the first period would be strange, and it is perhaps best to regard the mention of Tullia as a parenthesis and the description of the evils of the times applying to the whole period from the outbreak of civil war until Cicero's own death in 43.

20.6 a Cypro et hereditatis regiae dispensatione redeuntem

In 80 B.C. Ptolemy Alexander II, short-lived ruler of Egypt, died allegedly bequeathing his kingdom to Rome. The Romans sent a deputation to Tyre to take possession of his treasure, but did not prevent Ptolemy XII Auletes ascending the Egyptian throne and his brother taking control of Cyprus, also a Ptolemaic possession. Although by 63 no will could be produced, the legal status of the Ptolemaic possessions remained doubtful and a number of popular leaders suggested their annexation (Cic., *De Lege Agraria* II, 41-2). With the advent of the first triumvirate in 59, Ptolemaic security of tenure was again endangered. Auletes secured the support of the triumvirs by a large bribe, and was declared '*socius et amicus populi Romani*'. (Cic., *Pro Sest.* 26, 57). His brother proved less pliable and in 58 B.C. the tribune Clodius had a bill passed annexing Cyprus to Rome and further appointing Cato '*quaestor cum iure praetorio*' to supervise the annexation (Cic., *loc.cit.*; Velleius, II, 45; Strabo, 14, 6, 6). Among Clodius' reasons was the purely private motive of revenge upon Ptolemy for offering only a trifling sum for a ransom when Clodius was captured by pirates (Appian, *B.C.* II, 23; Strabo, *loc.cit.*) but perhaps more important was his desire to remove Cato from the political scene at Rome (Cic., *De Domo Sua* 25, 65, "*sic M. Cato invisus quasi per beneficium Cyprum relegatur*", also *Pro Sestio* 27, 60; and Plutarch, *Cato* 34) and to settle upon him some of the odium for what Cicero called "*rogatio sceleratissima*" (Cic., *Pro Sestio* 29, 62ff., where notice Cicero's anxiety to defend Cato's obedience to the law). Ptolemy committed suicide before Cato's arrival and Cato settled his affairs with his customary scrupulosity bringing back to Rome 7,000 talents, a sum far exceeding Roman expectations (Velleius, II, 45; Plutarch, *Cato* 36-7). His return was so welcome that the banks of the Tiber were crowded with people anxious to greet the arrival of his ships (Velleius, *loc.cit.*; Plutarch, *Cato* 39).

civili bello stipendium

Amongst the moneys removed by Caesar from the treasury in the temple of Saturn in 49 B.C. Lucan includes "*quod Cato longinqua vexit super aequora Cypro*" (*B.C.* III, 164). It was clearly used to defray the costs of war.

neminem ausurum coram Catone peccare

Presumably a reference to the desire of Clodius to have Cato out of the way before he proceeded to such measures as forcing Cicero into exile.

annorum adiectio paucissimorum

Cato lived ten years longer, committing suicide at Utica after the defeat of anti-Caesarian forces at Thapsus, April 6th 46 B.C.

libertati non suae tantum sed publicae natum

Here libertas stands for, in Cato's own case, the freedom of political action which a Roman aristocrat considered customary for himself, and in that of the state, freedom from rule by an individual or small clique possessed of extraordinary powers—in other words the same freedom for the whole political class as Cato wanted for himself. That Cato's whole life was directed towards that end rather than any individual gain was recognised not only by Cicero who might be regarded as a political ally (*De Officiis* I, 112; *Ad Att.* XII, 4 "*quod ille ea quae nunc sunt et futura viderit et ne fierent contenderit et facta ne videret vitam reliquerit.*") but also by opponents such as the author of the *Bellum Africanum* who speaks of his "*singularem virtutem*" (88) and Sallust (*B.C.* 54). In Seneca's day the selflessness of Cato's political career and his defence of libertas was a commonplace (Sen. *De Const. Sap.* 3.2; *De Tranq. Animi* 16, 1; Lucan *B.C.* II, 382-3) and did not necessarily imply support for a return to the constitution he knew (see C. Wirszubski, *Libertas as a political ideal at Rome,* pp. 125-43).

Caesarem fugere Pompeium sequi

It was not surprising that Cato wanted nothing to do with Caesar's cause but the incongruity of a man like Cato following Pompey was not lost on subsequent Roman writers. Lucan feels the need of a justification twice (at length *B.C.* II, 286-325 and subsequently IX, 19-24) while Seneca likewise remonstrates (*Ep. Mor.* 14.13, "*Quid tibi vis Marce Cato? iam non agitur de libertate: olim pessum data est. Quaeritur utrum Caesar an Pompeius possideat rem publicam: quid tibi cum ista contentione? nullae partes tuae sunt. Dominus eligitur: quid tua, uter vincat? potest melior vincere, non potest non peior esse qui vicerit.*")

illi

Seneca brings our attention back to Metilius, who has not been mentioned since 19.6. J. R. G. Wright has noted (in C. D. N. Costa *op.cit.* p. 43) how in Seneca certain passages take on an almost independent existence, and seem to develop at a tangent to the main question under discussion. This has clearly happened in ch. 20 where Seneca, trying to show that Metilius' state is not evil, has allowed sections on the praise of death and of examples of those who would have found death a boon to develop fully, with the intention of changing Marcia's feelings about death in general. He now needs to bring her attention back to the particular situation with which he is dealing and does so by this abrupt reference to Metilius.

21.1 Nimis tamen cito periit et immaturus

Seneca uses Marcia's imagined interjection to enable him to pass to the second of the divisions outlined in 19.4 "*an quod non diu vixit*". He deals with this subject at some length, concluding the arguments with a prosopopeia of Cremutius Cordus with which the work closes. He aims to show that Metilius' early death has deprived him of nothing in this life, and taking a line opposed to the Epicurean view of death he has embraced in 19.5ff., he pictures Marcia's son enjoying a blessed life in heaven with heroes of Roman legend, and Marcia's own father. The argument proceeds as follows:

21.1-3 Compared with the life of the universe, the life not only of man, but of all that he builds is short, and however long we live, we are dead far longer than we are alive.

21.4 Just as for different species, so for different individuals the time of life allotted differs.

21.5-6 Fate is immutable and nothing can change it.

21.6-7 Every minute we live is a subtraction from the total time remaining, but we fail to recognise it as such.

22. Extra years need not have been of benefit to Metilius, especially in view of the uncertain times in which we live.

23.1-2 Those who die young suffer less contagion from earthly things and return more easily to their original home in the heavens.

23.3-24.4 Metilius achieved the true goal of life, mature virtue. There remained nothing for him to achieve and death was a natural consequence.

24.5-25.3 Metilius is enjoying a far better life in the heavens.

26. Prosopopeia, in which Cremutius Cordus reminds Marcia of the superiority of life in heaven to that on earth.

venienti impactum hoc prospicimus hospitium

We should perhaps translate, "We look out upon this lodging forced upon those who come" (into life). A similar use of the passive of *impingo* can be found in Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* III, 19, 44), "*huic calix mulsi impingendus est, ut plorare desinat.*" *hospitium* is clearly used to produce the impression that this life is only a temporary abode, not our own, an idea which Seneca found an attractive description, sometimes referring to mortals as '*inquilinos*', 'lodgers' (*Ep. Mor.* 70, 16) or to our surroundings as a '*contubernium*', (*Tranq. An.* 11.7) and naturally one only shared a military tent for a limited duration.

D. N. G. Reid (*op.cit.* pp. 71-2) associates this phraseology with the much more common comparison of life to a dinner, from which a person should withdraw when full without complaint. This argument is found in Lucretius (*D.R.N.* III, 938 and 960) and is attributed to Epicurus by Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* V, 118) but is also associated with popular philosophy (cf. Teles *Reliquiae,* ed. Hense 16, 2-4) and found in Horace (*Sat.* I, 1, 119; *Epist.* II, 213-16). Seneca makes use of this form of the idea (*Ep. Mor.* 61, 4; 98, 15) but has here clearly extended it. Though impermanent, one can stay longer at a lodging house than at a dinner.

Conputa urbium saecula

That one should be reconciled to the death of an individual, because things much greater such as cities and even the earth's natural features perish is a common consolatory argument which Seneca uses also in Cremutius' concluding *prosopopeia* (26.6), early in his consolation to Polybius (*Ad Polyb.* 1, 1-3) and in writing to Lucilius urging him to face resolutely the prospect of his own death (*Ep. Mor.* 71, 15). Earlier the theme had been fully developed by Sulpicius in writing to console Cicero on the death of his daughter Tullia (Cic., *Ad Fam.* 4.5.4) where the author describes the fate of once famous Greek cities.

21.2 Terram hanc...puncti loco ponimus ad universa referentes...

punctum is used by Seneca both to refer to the space in the universe occupied by the earth (*N.Q.* I, *praef* 8 and IVb, 11.4) and also to the length of human life in comparison with eternity (*Ep. Mor.* 49, 3 "*Punctum est quod vivimus et adhuc puncto minus*). Here we have a gradatio in which the space of the earth is considered and dismissed as minute, '*terram puncti loco ponimus*' and the span of human life is subsequently described as even more trifling '*minorem portionem aetas nostra quam puncti habet si omni tempori comparetur.*' Both concepts are firmly entrenched in the consolatory tradition, Cicero using the word of the earth's spatial extent (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 40; and for

similar idea, but not word, *De Rep.* VI, 20). It is possible that this use of the word to refer to the earth's spatial extent may originate in the theories of the astronomers. *punctum* can be used to refer to a mathematical point (Cic. *Acad.* II, 36, 116), and the early astronomers assumed for mathematical purposes that when discussing the universe, the earth's surface was sufficiently close to its centre to be regarded as the centre of the cosmos (cf. Aristarchus, *On the Sizes and Distances of the Sun and Moon,* Hypothesis 2 "That the earth is in the relation of a point and centre to the sphere in which the moon moves" T. L. Heath, *Aristarchus of Samos,* Oxford 1913, p. 353). Aristotle's astronomical works make it clear that he regarded the earth as a very small body (*De Caelo* II, 298b; *Meteor,* I, 3, 340a). The concept that life, however long, is short in comparison with eternity is equally well established. According to Cicero Aristotle had described an insect living by the river Hypanis in Pontus which lived only for a day, and both he and Plutarch used these creatures to illustrate the position that in the context of eternity the difference between the longest and the shortest life paled into insignificance (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 94 "*Confer nostram longissimam aetatem cum aeternitate; in eadem propemodum brevitate, qua illae bestiolae, reperiemur,* cf. also Plutarch *Ad Apoll.* 111c-d, and for the idea without the illustration *ibid.* 117e; Cic., *De Sen.* 69; Sen., *Ep. Mor.* 71, 15; 77, 12; 99, 10 and 31).

ut pote cum ille se...totiens remetiatur

Seneca refers here to the Stoic doctrines of ἐκπύρωσις and παλιγγενεσία according to which the cyclic process of the world history would end in fire and be repeated endlessly. Seneca returns to this doctrine in the prosopopeia assigned to Cremutius Cordus (26.7) on which see the notes for a fuller exposition of the doctrine with relevant texts.

Uno modo multum est quod vivimus: si satis est

Seneca make similar reply to the general complaint that life is short in *De Brev. Vit.* (1.3-2.1), and says of himself (*Ep. Mor.* 61, 4) "*Vixi, Lucili carissime, quantum satis erat; mortem plenus expecto.*

21.3 inspecto quanto...quanto non vixerit

The form of Seneca's argument at this point reminds us of Lucretius' conclusion to his book on the soul and its mortality in which he urges the reader to think that however much he adds to his life, he will subtract nothing from the eternity of his death.

nec prorsum vitam ducendo demimus hilum
tempore de mortis nec delibare valemus
quominus esse diu possimus forte perempti

(*D.R.N.* III, 1087-89)

21.4 Deinde sibi maturus decessit

The idea to which Seneca returns at 23, 3-5 is that Metilius had achieved all that there was to achieve. He describes to Lucilius in similar terms the way in which premature death should be regarded (*Ep. Mor.* 93, 4 "'*At ille obiit viridis.' Sed officia boni civis, boni amici, boni filii executus est;... licet aetas eius imperfecta sit, vita perfecta est.*" and *ibid.* 93, 8). Coupled with the thought that mature virtue is the goal of life is the thought, fully expounded in 23, that close upon maturity comes the end. This theme is developed by Cicero who draws the comparison of fruits on the tree (*De Sen.* 5 "*Sed tamen necesse fuit aliquid extremum, et tamquam in arborum bacis terraeque fructibus, maturitate tempestiva quasi vietum et caducum...*).

21.5 Fixus est cuique terminus

The deterministic argument which proceeds to *dies primus adscripsit* is reminiscent of the fatalism of the Stoics and the teachings of the fatalistic astrologers, on which see 18, 3 and note. At this point however his phraseology is reminiscent of Lucretius (*D.R.N.* I 76-77 repeated at V, 89-90) "*...finita potestas denique cuique/quanam sit ratione atque alte terminus haerens.*" In a passage where Vergil also is quoted this could be either conscious allusion or subconscious reminiscence. Seneca's phraseology is very similar at *Ep. Mor.* 101, 7. "*Stat quidem terminus nobis ubi illum inexorabilis fatorum necessitas fixit,...*"

metasque dati pervenit ad aevi

Seneca quotes the concluding lines given by Vergil to Pallas before his encounter with Turnus (*Aen.* X, 472).

21.6-7 Ex illo quo...iter mortis ingressus est...

Seneca is not here simply saying that death is a consequence of birth, as at 10, 5, but is introducing the related idea that each step in growth, from the time of our birth is a step towards death. The argument is supported by two antitheses '*illi ipsi qui adiciebantur adulescentiae anni vitae detrahebantur*' and '*Incrementa ipsa...damna sunt.*' For the idea that life is a journey towards death, see 11, 2 and note. For the treatment of each period of life as a reduction of the time remaining we may compare the way in which Cicero (*De Sen.* 4) answers the charge that old age had crept up unnoticed "*Qui enim citius adulescentiae senectus quam pueritiae adulescentia obrepit? Deinde qui minus gravis esset eis senectus si octingentesimum annum agerent quam si octogesimum. Praeterita enim aetas, quamvis longa, cum effluxisset, nulla consolatione permulcere posset stultam senectutem.*" Jerome (*Ep.* 60, 19) using phraseology resembling the last sentence of section 7 takes up the idea that dying is a

daily process of change of which the failure of the body is simply the culmination.

necis

Here *necis* simply means natural death, a comparatively rare usage. Lewis and Short cite as parallels Suetonius (*Caes.* 5) *post necem consulis* and Justinus (*Epit.* 42, 1, 1) *post necem Mithridatis. O.L.D.* further cites Vergil (*Georg.* III, 480 *et genus omne neci...dedit*) and Ovid (*Trist.* I, 2, 40, *nescit adesse necem*).

22.1 Unde enim scis...hac morte consultum sit?

Seneca here returns to the theme of *opportunitas mortis,* examples of which, or rather examples of the absence of which, had been used to illustrate the theme of death the liberator in ch. 20. Such a theme leads naturally to a description of the evils of the times and the fluctuations of fortune to which the deceased might otherwise have been exposed and gives to Seneca the opportunity to wax eloquently and wittily on contemporary society. The use of this theme is in fact the common practice of consolatory writers and those who in other contexts have occasion to mention the recently deceased. Cicero for example writes to Titius in 46 that such are the disturbances of the dissolute era that those are most fortunate who have had no children, and that those who have lost them are less wretched than if they had done so in a better period (*Ad Fam.* V, 16, 3). Similarly Sulpicius consoles Cicero on the loss of his daughter (*Ad Fam.* IV, 5, 3) "*hisce temporibus non pessime cum iis esse actum quibus sine dolore licitum est mortem cum vita commutare. Quid autem fuit quod illam hoc tempore ad vivendum magno opere invitare posset?*" In describing great orators of the past, Cicero comments on the good fortune of Hortensius in living only so long as it was possible to live '*bene beateque*' (*Brutus* 4) and draws attention to the *opportunitas* of the elder Crassus' death (*De Oratore* III, 12). Amongst consolatory writers Plutarch uses the theme frequently, and quotes instances of its use from Homer (*Iliad* XII, 56-72 at *Ad Apoll.* 114B), and an anonymous comic poet (*Ad Apoll.* 110e-f). Likewise Jerome can regard Nepotianus as fortunate because he has escaped the wretchedness which those still alive suffer (*Ep.* 60, 15, 1 and 17, 1). The theme naturally finds a place in laudatory biography, and it is perfectly natural for Tacitus (*Agricola* 45, 3) to say of his father-in-law who died before the terror of Domitian's last years '*Tu vero felix, Agricola, non vitae tantum claritate, sed etiam opportunitate mortis.*'

quia...nihil nisi quod praeteriit certum est.

The certainty of the past as a source of beatitude was widely emphasised in Hellenistic philosophy. The Epicureans repeatedly stressed the importance of recollection as a source of pleasure and comfort (cf. Epicurus, Πρὸς Μενοικέα 122 "ὥστε φιλοσοφητέον καὶ νέῳ καὶ γέροντι, τῷ μὲν ὅπως γηράσκων νεάζῃ τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς διὰ τὴν χάριν τῶν γεγονότων" also *Sent. Vat.* 17 and 55). Professor Grimal is perhaps over-ingenious in seeing this passage and a similar reference in the *De Brevitate Vitae* (10, 2) as a veiled allusion to Chrysippus' doctrine of possibles (Seneca *De Brevitate Vitae* ed. Grimal, Paris 1965, p. 45) but there can be no doubt that Seneca was convinced of the value of the past as something certain in a changing and uncertain world. As he says (*loc.cit.*) "*In tria tempora vita dividitur, quod fuit, quod est, quod futurum est. Ex his, quod agimus breve est, quod acturi sumus dubium, quod egimus certum. Hoc est enim in quod Fortuna ius perdidit...*" For Seneca it is the faculty of memory and use of the past which helps to separate man from dumb animals (*Ep. Mor.* 124, 6). Here the contrast is between the certain blessings which Metilius enjoyed in life and the uncertainty of the future.

22.2 In outlining the misfortunes which might have befallen Metilius, we have a gradation from the ills which time inevitably brings, those of old age, to those accidents and sickness which were an unpredictable but widespread feature of Roman life culminating in the sufferings unjustly imposed by unfavourable political conditions, a theme which enables Seneca to return to the subject of Cremutius Cordus and his fate.

illud filii tui pulcherrimum corpus et summa pudoris custodia...conservatum

Seneca once again takes the opportunity to praise not only Metilius' handsome figure but also his high moral code and its rarity in contemporary times. Such brief allusions prepare us for another full-scale development of the *laus mortui* which runs from 23.3 to 24.4.

potuisse tot morbos...perferret formae decus

Cicero tells us that the weakness of old age was a common 'locus' in his day (*De Sen.* 27) and its ugliness is also a common theme. Horace describes how the beauty of the prostitute Lyce has faded because she has lived too long (*Odes* IV, 13, 10-12 and 21-28) and Pliny the Elder claims that the greatest boon nature offers to men is a short life which saves them from limbs hardly able to feel, failing sight and hearing, tottering gait and chattering teeth (*N.H.* VIII, 167-8). Seneca returns to the theme in criticizing Maecenas' plea for prolonged life at any price (*Ep. Mor.* 101, 10-15

passim), but perhaps it is Juvenal who gives the theme the most picturesque expression (*Sat.* X, 196-200).

plurima sunt iuvenum discrimina, pulchrior ille
hoc, atque ille alio, multum hic robustior illo;
una senum facies, cum voce trementia membra
et iam leve caput madidique infantia nasi
frangendus misero gingiva panis inermi.

neque enim recta ingenia...usque in senectutem pertulerunt

The idea that old age is subject to moral decadence is clearly literary, (cf. Juvenal *Sat.* X, 204-9; Martial *Epig.* 6, 26) but the stories about Tiberius' behaviour on Capri during his last years which circulated immediately after his death may have helped to bring the theme to Seneca's mind. Tacitus (*Ann.* VI, 51, 5-6) contrasts the good reputation of his early life with his extreme old age when he rushed into every kind of disgraceful act.

summaque illis curarum fuit quid essent, quid biberent

Reid (*op.cit.* p. 143) rightly point out that for Seneca nothing was lower than devotion to the pleasures of the stomach. He was vehement in his attacks on the effort put into satisfying luxurious tastes (*Ep. Mor.* 60, 2-4) and tells us that he refused foods such as oysters and mushrooms which served only as enticements to eat when full (*Ep. Mor.* 108, 14). He writes to Paulinus (*Brev. Vit.* 7, 1) "*In primis autem et illos numero qui nulli rei nisi vino ac libidini vacant: nulli enim turpius occupati sunt...in ventrem ac libidinem proiectorum inhonesta labes est.*" Sallust (*Cat.* 1, 1) had previously compared to beasts people with such pre-occupations.

22.3 incendia, ruinas

Our literary sources give us the impression that fires and falling buildings were a genuine and regular source of danger. As early as the Augustan period, Propertius, bewailing the various forms in which death can approach, mentions (*Eleg.* II, 27, 9) "*praeterea domibus flammam, domibusque ruinas*" and a fragment of the declaimer Papirius Fabianus (in Sen. *Contr.* II, 1, 11 and 12) laments that modern building fashions with tall buildings and narrow streets afford neither protection from fires nor escape from danger. The luxury which accumulates things which fire will destroy is criticised by the Elder Pliny (*N.H.* 35, 3; 36, 110). Seneca refers to these dangers regularly. Neither fire nor the collapse of buildings should be unexpected (*Tranq. Animi* 11, 6), the buildings on which men base their claim to fame are a source only of danger (*Const. Sap.* 12, 2), and in view of

the danger of fire or collapse it is folly for a man to pride himself on his fine house (*De Vit. Beat.* 26, 2). Although the theme may appear to be something of a literary commonplace, the most notable example of which is probably found in Juvenal, (*Sat.* III, 197-222) we know that fires caused serious damage in Rome in A.D. 22 (Tac. *Ann.* III, 72), A.D. 27 (Tac. *Ann.* IV, 64), A.D. 36 (*ibid.* VI, 45), A.D. 64 (*ibid.* XV, 38-44) and A.D. 80 (Suet. *Titus* 8, 3).

naufragia

Seneca knew well the dangers of shipwreck. His uncle C. Galerius had been killed by such an event, though his body was rescued by Seneca's aunt (*Ad Helv.* 19, 4-7). Although Seneca refers to this source of danger on a number of occasions (cf. *Ep. Mor.* 4, 7; 117, 31) it seems to be part of a stock list of hazards rather than the result of personal experience. C. D. N. Costa points out (Sen. *Medea,* ed. C. D. N. Costa, Oxford 1973, p. 99) that the dangers of seafaring was a stock theme of the declaimers, and the frequency of literary references to the theme, and the paintings dedicated by those who had escaped drowning, suggests that for Romans *naufragia* were not an uncommon occurrence (Cic. *D.N.D.* III, 89; Sen. *Suas.* 1, 1; *Contr.* X, 5, 1; Sen. *Medea* 301-308; Juv. *Sat.* XII, 17-61).

lacerationesque medicorum ossa vivis legentium...pudenda curantium.

Favez (*op.cit.* p. 84) rightly points out that *ossa legere* has two basic meanings, firstly to pick up the bones that remain after the cremation of a corpse, and secondly, to remove bones from the body of someone still alive.

It is worth pointing out that for the Romans medicine was a low profession, usually practiced by Greeks, and the incompetence of doctors was a frequent subject of satire. We may cite Petronius (*Sat.* 42) "*medici illum perdiderunt, immo magis malus fatus, medicus enim nihil aliud est quam animi consolatio*" and in the same vein Martial (*Epig.* I, 47). There is even a surviving epitaph found in Rome in which no-one is left in doubt of the cause of death (Buecheler, *C.E.L.* 543, 8-9 *medici male membra secarunt/corpori*).

Post haec exilium;...Rutilius.

We now reach the climax of the list of disasters, those inflicted in political adversity, and once more we have an ascending series, exile, imprisonment, suicide all forced upon those who deserved far better.

P. Rutilius Rufus was consul in 105, and subsequently accompanied Q. Mucius Scaevola (cos. 95) as legate in the latter's proconsulship of Asia

probably in 94. There both dealt firmly with the abuses of the equestrian *publicani* who were responsible for tax-collection in the province, and naturally aroused their hostility. On his return Rutilius was charged with extortion and tried in 92. Though manifestly innocent he was condemned by the equestrian jury and went into exile in Smyrna. His innocence, and also his method of defence (Quint. *Inst. Or.* XI, 1, 12), enabled Roman historians and moralists to turn him into Roman equivalent of Socrates, and he further enhanced his reputation after Sulla's victory over the Marians when he refused Sulla's request for him to return (Val. Max. *Fact. et Dict. Mem.* VI, 4, 4; Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 24, 4). Relevant texts to Rutilius' trial and subsequent fate are cited by Broughton, *M.R.R.* II, p. 8 and the political background is given by E. Badian in Q. Mucius Scaevola and the Province of Asia, *Athenaeum* 34, 1956. It was the farce of Rutilius' trial which led to the attempt by the tribune M. Livius Drusus to wrest control of the courts from the equestrians in the following year, provoking an acute political crisis.

Seneca makes wide use of Rutilius as an exemplar of innocence, but always links him with others who have suffered similarly, linking him especially with Socrates (*Ep. Mor.* 24, 4) or Cato (*De Vit. Beat.* 18, 3; *De Ben.* V, 17, 2) or as here both (*Tranq. Animi* 16, 1; *Ep. Mor.* 98, 12). The remembrance of Rutilius' example was probably much assisted by the memoirs he wrote in exile (Tac., *Agr.* 1, 3) of which surviving fragments have been gathered in Peter, *Hist. Rom. Rel.* I², 189ff.'

carcerem...Socrates.

Socrates was tried in 399 B.C. by the restored democracy at Athens on charges of refusing to recognise the Gods recognised by the state, introducing new divinities and corrupting the youth, (*D.L.* II, 40) and convicted. Instead of either taking the opportunity to go into exile before the case came to trial, or taking the offer of escape made subsequent to his condemnation (Plato, *Crito* 45B) Socrates insisted that the sentence be carried out, remaining in prison until it was. It is notable that Seneca describes his punishment as '*carcerem*' rather than '*venenum*' or '*mortem*' but everyone knew the ultimate fate of Socrates, and the understatement perhaps heightens the effect of the last in the series of disasters resulting from political misfortune, suicide, and its Roman exemplar par excellence, Cato Uticensis.

Voluntario vulnere transfixum pectus:...Cato.

The reference is to Cato's suicide at Utica in 46. His choice of this alternative to submission to Caesar became a cause célèbre immediately and

his death was followed by the publication of *Catones*, eulogistic biographies of him, by Cicero and then M. Brutus, to which Caesar replied with an Anti-Cato. In 44 Cicero could remark how his suicide conformed with the *gravitas* and *constantia* of the rest of his life (*De Officiis* I, 110). R. MacMullen (*Enemies of the Roman Order,* Cambridge, Mass., 1967, p. 19) comments that very soon Cato became the stereotype of virtue facing insuperable odds, and that eulogistic treatment of his suicide very soon lost any political significance. Though his exemplary behaviour in Cyprus and his bearing after defeat in the elections for the praetorship gave material for exemplary citation, it is Cato's suicide, where he was forced to tear open with his own hand the wound his physician had bound, which receives most attention. Seneca repeatedly sees in that act the claim of the *sapiens* to liberty in all circumstances (cf. *De Prov.* 2, 9-12; 3, 4; *De Const. Sap.* 2, 2 "*neque enim Cato post libertatem vixit nec libertas post Catonem.*" *Ep. Mor.* 104, 29-33 where death is the climax of misfortunes imposed upon him). Here, as in the previous two *exempla* the emphasis is on the undeserved nature of his sufferings.

non mehercules quisquam illam accepisset nisi daretur inscientibus

As Favez comments (*op. cit.*, pp. L-LI) this passage appears inconsistent with what Seneca says at 18.8 "*Respondebis velle te vivere: quid ni?*" While this is true, it must be remembered that each argument is used in support of wider overall arguments, at 18.8 to persuade Marcia that her life still contains a preponderance of goods, and here to persuade her that her son has been deprived of nothing by death, and in fact has probably been saved from many burdens.

Itaque si felicissimum est...in integrum restitui.

This is very much the same pessimistic attitude as is expressed in 11.1 '*Tota flebilis vita est.*' It is expressed in this form by Sophocles (*Oed. Col.* 1224-26)

μῆ φῦναι τὸν ἅπαντα νικᾷ λόγον· τὸ δ' ἐπεὶ φανῇ
βῆναι κεῖθεν ὅθεν περ ἥκει
πολὺ δεύτερον, ὡς τάχιστα

The theme was much favoured by consolatory writers and is often attached to a myth attributed by Plutarch to Aristotle in which Silenus when captured by Midas declared that the best thing for all men and women is not to be born, and the second best to die as quickly as possible (*Ad Apoll.* 115e).

Cicero relates the same myth (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 114) and adds that there is a similar myth in Crantor (*ibid.* I, 115) where one Terinaeus, mourning the death of his son extravagantly, is told

Euthynous potitur fatorum numine leto
sic fuit utilius finiri ipsique tibique.

Also connected with the theme is the view that mourning is appropriate for birth, and happiness for death, attributed by Cicero (*loc. cit.*) to Euripides *Cresphontes*, but closely linked to the story of a Thracian tribe, the Trausoi who Herodotus (5.4) tells us greeted the birth of a child with lamentation because of the ills it must endure, but buried the dead with jollity because the person had left his or her misfortunes behind and enjoyed perfect blessedness. The story is repeated by Valerius Maximus (*Fact. et. Dict. Mem.* II, 6, 12) and Pomponius Mela (*De Chor.* II, 18) and was obviously well known when Seneca was writing.

22.4 Seianus patrem tuum clienti suo Satrio Secundo congiarium dedit

Seneca again turns Marcia's attention to the prudent suicide of her father in A.D. 25, finding in his action a domestic example of his argument that fate can bring worse things than death, and that by dying Metilius may have escaped such things. Tacitus links another client of Sejanus, Pinarius Natta with Satrius Secundus as Cordus' prosecutor (*Ann.* IV, 34). A letter of Seneca (*Ep. Mor.* 122, 11) suggests that he moved in the same circles as Pinarius, which may explain his tactful refusal to name the second accuser, (see also 1, 3 and notes and introduction p. 5).

Irascebatur illi ob unum aut alterum liberius dictum

The only extant suggestion of a reason other than his writings for the charge against Cremutius is found here, but Seneca seems to be discussing Sejanus' actual reasons for anger rather than the contents of any formal charge.

The failure of Tacitus to record the real reasons for Sejanus' anger may perhaps be explained by his view that such outspoken frankness about live rulers was both imprudent and unproductive (Tac., *Agr.* 42, 4 and W. Suerbaum, *op. cit.* p. 71) and that to mention Cremutius' remarks about the praetorian prefect would detract from the picture of a victim of unwarranted malice.

Decernebatur illi...Caesar reficiebat

The theatre of Pompey, completed and dedicated as a temple of Venus in his second consulship 55 B.C., was the first permanent theatre in Rome

(Tertullian, *De Spect.* 10). It was destroyed by fire in 22 A.D. and it was after this that a statue was decreed to Sejanus, as a reward for his work in containing the fire (Tac., *Ann.* III, 72). The use of the imperfect '*reficiebat*' is very apt, as Tiberius had little enthusiasm either for the theatre or for grandiose public works, and when he died twelve years after Cremutius, the work was still incomplete. Eventually Caligula finished the re-building and performed the re-dedication (Suet., *Tib.* 47; *Cal.* 21).

22.5 non rumperetur...perfidum militem.

Z. Stewart (*Sejanus, Gaetulicus and Seneca, A.J.P.* 74, 1953, pp. 70-85) has noticed the violence of the attacks on Sejanus and his circle here and in 1, 4 (*...illorum carnificum scelera...*). He argues that the vehemence shown here not found in other references to Sejanus in Seneca's work is an attempt by him to dissociate himself from a group under suspicion after A.D. 39, especially necessary since many connections existed between Seneca's family and Sejanus' supporters, and hence sees the purpose of the *Ad Marciam* as primarily political, i.e. to illustrate that Seneca was not really a Seianianus and that he had friends in the opposite political grouping. It is true that Stewart has detected a number of former associates of Sejanus in the group associated with Gaetulicus. Even so his basic theory for the *Ad Marciam* will not hold. The dating of the work is too uncertain; it is unlikely that members of the higher aristocracy such as Aemilius Lepidus and Gaetulicus allowed their political relationships to be determined by Sejanus even after his death. (See M. Griffin, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-3, 47-57). Moreover in Seneca's other allusions to Sejanus (*Tranq. Animi* 11, 11; *N.Q.* 1, 1, 3; *Ep. Mor.* 55, 3) no comment upon his character is necessary, while in a work addressed to Marcia, where the fate of her father plays an important part in the argument, it is natural that Seneca should attack those responsible for it.

†Consecratur† subscriptio

The manuscript reading is clearly impossible, and numerous conjectures have been made, none of which has achieved universal approval. Hermes' conjecture *componitur* is supported by *De Ben.* 3, 26, 2 "*cum Maro...iam subscriptionem componeret.*" But it is difficult to imagine such an easy reading being corrupted. Lipsius' proposal *consarcinatur* is attractive, for the verb is rare enough to deceive a scribe, gives the plausible meaning "an indictment was pieced together", and is supported by Ammianus Marcellinus (14, 5, 6 *crimina...consarcinando*). The major problem here is the lack of an attested use of the verb before the second century A.D. Madvig's *concinnatur* "was invented" gives good sense, is also rare enough

to be capable of corruption, and is supported by a passage in the *Epistulae Morales* (49.8) where Seneca uses the verb to describe a foolishly devised syllogism, "*alia...ad exemplum huius delirationis concinnata.*"

22.7 Accusatores...adeunt consulum tribunalia, queruntur mori Cordum

The consuls were Cornelius Cossus and Asinius Agrippa. Muretus, followed by most commentators, believed that the basis of the accusers'complaint was that if Cremutius died *indemnatus* they would lose the reward of a quarter of the defendant's possessions, the reward for a successful prosecution. R. S. Rogers (*Criminal Trials and Criminal Legislation under Tiberius,* Middletown, Connecticut, 1935, pp. 86-7), asserts that this is strange in view of the refusal of Tiberius the previous year to countenance a senatorial proposal to abolish the rewards for delation if a person accused *maiestatis* committed suicide before the case was completed (Tac., *Ann.* IV, 30). However the following statement of Ulpian about the *lex Iulia maiestatis* might help to explain matters "*extinguitur enim crimen mortalitate. nisi forte quis maiestatis reus fuit; nam hoc crimine nisi a successoribus purgetur, hereditas fisco vindicatur. plane non quisque legis Iuliae maiestatis reus est in eadem condicione est, sed qui perduellionis reus est, hostile animo adverus rem publicam vel principem animatus; ceterum si quis ex alia causa legis Iuliae maiestatis reus sit, morte crimine liberatur.*" (*Dig.* XLVIII, 4, 11). Now the attempted *senatus consultum* on the rewards of accusers had followed the suicide of Caecilius Cornutus who was charged with having supplied money to the elder Vibius Serenus against whom the charge was made "*structas principi insidias, missos in Galliam concitores belli...*" This was a charge clearly covered by the more serious of the charges under the *lex Iuliae maiestatis.* It is not impossible that the rewards of accusers were only safeguarded in this sort of case, while the case which had been so far made against Cremutius Cordus at most amounted to the less serious charges under that law according to which the suicide of the defendant saved his property from confiscation.

If as F. B. Marsh has suggested (*op. cit.* 290-3) from comparison with the case of Gnaeus Piso, the accusations about Cremutius' history were simply an attempt to blacken his character and act as a prelude to more serious charges, the accusers may have wished the consuls to be informed of those charges either to preserve their right to a reward under the more serious of the *maiestas* charges, or alternatively (with Marsh and Rogers, *loc. cit.*) to protect themselves and their patron Sejanus from the suspicion of a wholly frivolous prosecution.

23 Turning aside from the encumbrances of this life from which Metilius is freed Seneca pictures (23, 1-2; 24, 5-end) the better life his soul now enjoys, interrupting his theme with praise of Metilius, showing him worthy and ready to enjoy this new existence (23, 3-24, 4). The contents of the total picture of the life beyond, and the form of the second part of the description owe much to the '*Somnium Scipionis*' with which Cicero concludes his *De Republica.* The different situations obviously necessitate divergences; for example Cicero portrays Scipio Aemilianus dreaming, whilst for Metilius his experience of the new world is actual, but we notice close formal correspondences. In both the *Somnium* (*De Rep.* VI, 13ff.) and the *Ad Marciam* (25.2) grandfather introduces grandson to this new life and from the heavenly places describes the ordering of the universe. The idea of the προσωποποιία in which a highly respected deceased relative encourages the living also takes us back to the form of the *Somnium.*

In doctrine too the teaching of the *Somnium* about the life beyond and that of the *Ad Marciam* bear resemblances to each other. In both the Platonic doctrine of the pre-existence and after life of the souls is constructed within the framework of Stoic metaphysics in which divinity is found not transcendent in a world beyond the universe but immanent in the universe. Cicero and Seneca vary the proportions in which they blend Stoic and Platonic concepts, and for example, the doctrines of ἐκπύρωσις and παλιγγενεσία with which Seneca concludes the *Ad Marciam* (26, 6-7) find no expression in the *Somnium.* Nevertheless it is once again the resemblances which strike us. For both Cicero and Seneca the soul not the body is the true self (*Rep.* VI, 26; *Ad. Marc.* 24, 5); its origin is heavenly and it descends to the body (*Rep.* VI, 13 and 15; *Ad Marc.* 24, 5) for the soul the body is like a chain or prison (*Rep.* VI, 14 and 15; *Ad Marc.* 24, 5). It is liberated by death and returns to its heavenly home (*Rep.* VI, 29; *Ad Marc.* 23, 1). There the soul finds its bliss in the knowledge of the world processes (*Rep.* VI, 13; *Ad Marc.* 25, 2).

The main area of controversy surrounding this part of the *Ad Marciam* concerns the debt of Seneca to Posidonius. In 1878 P. Corssen thought that he had found in Posidonius a common source for the *Somnium Scipionis* and the first book of the *Tusculan Disputations* (P. Corssen, *De Posidonio Rhodio M Tulli Ciceronis in libro I Tusc. Disp. et in Somnio Scipionis auctore,* dissert. Bonn 1878). In 1901, E. Badstübner, building on Corssen's thesis proposed to see in Posidonius the source of the conclusion to the *Ad Marciam,* (*Beiträge zur Erklärung und Kritik der philosophischen Schriften Senecas,* Hamburg 1901, pp. 1-18). In 1936, however, P. Boyancé showed that there was no necessity to attribute to Posidonius the responsibility for

incorporating Platonic doctrine into the *Somnium*. Cicero had clearly read the *Phaedo* himself (*Pro Scauro* 5) and the doctrines as he expounds them of the body as a prison for the soul which is of celestial origin could have easily been derived from Platonic commentators. Iamblichus ascribes to various '*Platonici*' including Heraclides of Pontus a doctrine which placed the origin of souls in various regions of the heavens, and Varro had ascribed to the Pythagorean Epicharmus a doctrine in which the origin of the mind could be discovered in the fires of the sun, (Iamblichus in Stobaeus *Ecl.* I, XLIX, 39; Varro, *De Lingua Latina* V, 59; P. Boyancé, *Études sur le songe de Scipion,* Paris, 1936, pp. 120-136). With this, the arguments of Badstübner for the Posidonian origin of the conclusion to the *Ad Marciam* automatically fell. In 1964, however, in a careful study, K. Abel maintained that the form of Seneca's conclusion was derived from the *Somnium,* but the doctrine was Posidonian, arguing that the specifically Stoic additions to the picture of the life beyond could all be traced to Posidonius, who was the source of the particular merging of Platonic and Stoic concepts in the *Ad Marciam* (K. Abel, *Poseidonios und Senecas Trostschrift an Marcia* (*dial* 6, 24, 5ff.) in *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 107, 1964 pp. 221-260). Abel (p. 241) suggests eight points on which Seneca's teaching about the world processes and about the life of the soul are derived from Posidonius. They are 1) Uninterrupted communication of bodiless souls through direct contact; 2) Vulcanisation causing shifts in the earth's surface, the folding up of mountains, the shifting of the coastline and similar major changes; 3) The doctrines of ἐκπύρωσις and παλιγγενεσία; 4) The pre-existence of the soul; 5) A dualistic conception of body and soul, in which the body is described as a chain, a prison or an outer garment; 6) The liberation of the soul through death; 7) The immortality of the soul; 8) The disasters of earth-movement, floods and consumption by fire.

It is certainly true that in later life Seneca was well acquainted with the work of Posidonius whom he cites frequently, (in *Ep. Mor.* 78, 83, 87, 88, 90, 92, 94, 95, 113), that Seneca is less inclined to cite his sources in the *Consolationes* than in the works definitely attributable to his later years, and that the astrological doctrines of *Ad Marciam* 18, 3 and 21, 6 are in the spirit which Augustine attributes to Posidonius (*De Civ. Dei* V, 2). Having said that, it is necessary to impose serious limitations on Abel's view. The close correspondences between the *Ad Marciam* and the *Somnium* make it unnecessary to look any further than Cicero for Seneca's source of a doctrine common to both. Boyancé has shown that for 4) and 5) the indirect source for Seneca may not be Posidonius but an Academic commentator on Plato (*loc. cit.*). It is pressing the evidence too far to suggest that Seneca

taught doctrine 1) that there was uninterrupted communication of bodiless souls through direct contact. In the *Ad Marciam* (26, 4) Seneca makes Cremutius Cordus describe the quality of life enjoyed by the blessed dead. His discourse touches upon the absence of military conflict by land and sea, murder and continuous litigation such as detracts from earthly life, and proceeds "*nihil in obscuro, detectas mentes et aperta praecordia et in publico medioque vitam.*" He is surely thinking here of the ethical qualities of souls not wishing to hide anything from each other, rather than the physical or non-physical means by which they communicate. Seneca's description is valid whether or not he holds the view attributed by Cicero to Posidonius (*De Div.* 1, 129) "*deorum animi sine oculis, sine auribus, sine lingua sentiunt inter se quid quisque sentiat*". Thirdly we may notice that the doctrine of ἐκπύρωσις and παλιγγενεσία 3) and of the survival of the soul after death 7) are found not only in the teaching of Posidonius but also of Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus, and that the fate of Metilius whose soul survives the death of the body could accord either with the teaching of Cleanthes who held that all souls survived until the world conflagration or that of Chrysippus who held only the souls of the wise (to whom Seneca assimilates Metilius) do so. (*D.L.* VII, 157 = *S.V.F.* I, 522 and II, 811. "Κλεάνθης μὲν οὖν πάσας ἐπιδιαμένειν μέχρι τῆς ἐκπυρώσεως, Χρύσιππος δὲ τὰς τῶν σοφῶν μόνον.) This leaves only the geophysical doctrines 2) and 8) to be associated with Posidonius, but such doctrines are not uniquely Posidonian, being found, for example, in Cicero's writings (*De Div.* I, 111). Other points of comparison adduced by Abel in his argument will be dealt with at the relevant point of the commentary, but at this point we may safely make the following assertion; Seneca may have read Posidonius; nevertheless the search for a sole source for a picture such as Seneca's is bound to prove vain, especially since there is no adequate evidence for us to assess the influence of Seneca's own teachers, the Sextii, Sotion and Papirius Fabianus on this aspect of his thought. One of the less satisfactory assumptions of Quellenforschung is that no Roman writer was capable of reading a number of authors and forming his own particular synthesis of ideas. To be fair, Abel is not this crass but it is to be stressed that the liberties which a Cicero or Seneca might take with a predecessor's teaching for artistic purposes (see Abel *op. cit.* pp. 256-57) were also possible when they held slightly differing views. For a perceptive discussion of the whole Posidonian question see René Hoven, *op. cit.* pp. 95-102.

In this description of the future life of souls Seneca uses a number of poetic phrases to enhance his picture. We may note 23.1 *ad superos,* 25.1 *ad excelsa* and 26.1 *ex arce caelesti.*

minimum enim faecis...obsoleti inlitique eluunt.

The conception that the soul was corrupted by its contact with earthly things is found in Plato, scattered through the *Phaedo* (especially at 80E-81C, but also 66B-C, 82C and 83D). It is used to suggest that since the life of philosophy consists in freeing the soul from the corporeal, death which is the complete separation of soul and body must be a boon. In such a form Cicero uses the doctrine, in a passage derived from Posidonius (*De Div.* I, 129-30) where the force of the mind wandering free from all contact with the body in dreams or in ecstatic states is contrasted with that of the mind completely intertwined with the body. However consolatory writers, as Seneca here, found the doctrine particularly useful in consoling the relatives of those who had died young, for their shorter life gave them less time to become tainted not only by bodily desires but by association. Plutarch uses the concept in this form to console his wife for the death of their young son (*Ad Uxorem* 611E-F). The theory of the heavenly origin of the soul is also clearly Platonic, and along with it the concept that the virtuous soul can win its return to the heavenly places (*Timaeus* 42B "καὶ ὁ μὲν εὖ τὸν προσήκοντα χρόνον βίους πάλιν εἰς τὴν τοῦ ξυννόμου πορευθεὶς οἴκησιν ἄστρου). It was widely held by ancient philosophers; Cicero claims to have found it in the writings of Aristotle (*De Div.* I, 53) and uses it himself in suggesting that death will be no evil (*De Sen.* 77). By the time Seneca was writing the thought was commonplace and was used in declamation by Arellius Fuscus (Sen. *Suas.* 6, 6). However, orthodox Stoic doctrine differed somewhat from the Platonic conception in that it held the origin of the soul to be divine only remotely. Among the Stoics Zeno, Cleanthes, Chrysippus and Panaetius all held that the soul like the body was produced by procreation, which is proved by the temperamental resemblances as well as the physical which children bear to their parents (*S. V.F.* I, 128 and 518; II, 806, and Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* I, 32, 79) and reconciled this with their view of the divine origin of the soul (*S. V.F.* II, 633) by suggesting that it was transmitted through the mediation of the first men, who were "born from the sun, with the assistance of divine fire" (*S. V.F. I*, 124; for this interpretation of the Stoic view, René Hoven, *op. cit.* pp. 42-43).

It should be emphasised however that the mechanics of the soul's return to its heavenly abode presuppose a cosmos constructed on the Stoic pattern. The soul was composed of the lightest elements, fire and air. In the Stoic cosmos the heaviest elements, earth and water were borne towards the centre of the cosmos, while the lightest, air and fire flew away to its outer regions. Thus one could explain in purely physical terms how the soul which through restraint or short period of contact had received only

minimal bodily dross could return to its place of origin more easily. Thus runs Panaetius' argument as quoted by Cicero (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 42-3) "*is autem animus qui, si est horum quattuor generum ex quibus omnia constare dicuntur, ex inflammata anima constat, ut potissimum videtur Panaetio, superiora capessat necesse est. nihil enim habent haec duo genera proni et supera semper petunt. ita, sive dissipantur, procul a terris id evenit, sive permanent et conservant habitum suum, hoc etiam magis necesse est ferantur ad caelum...et dividatur crassus hic et concretus aer, qui est terrae proximus...Accedit ut eo facilius animus evadat ex hoc aere...eumque perrumpat quod nihil est animo velocius, nulla est celeritas quae possit cum animi celeritate contendere. qui si permanet incorruptus suique similis, necesse est ita feratur ut penetret et dividat omne caelum hoc...Cum enim sui similem et levitatem et calorem adeptus est, tamquam paribus examinatus ponderibus nullam in partem movetur...*" It is this physical conception which Cicero uses when he illustrates the difference in the lot of souls after death, when souls enslaved to the body are unable to escape the physical environs of the earth (*De Rep.* VI, 29; *Tusc. Disp.* I, 75). It is this basic conception which underlies Seneca's thinking here. When Seneca imagines the soul enjoying a future existence, he makes use of all three concepts found in this passage; the cloying effects of the corporeal (*N.Q.* I, *praef.* 11; *Ep. Mor.* 65, 16; 92, 31-32; 102, 22 "*gravi terrenoque detineor*"); the return of the soul to its place of origin in the heavens (*Ep. Mor.* 79, 12; 86, 1; 92, 30, "*originis suae memor*"; 120, 15); the elevation of the soul through the universe in accordance with the principles of Stoic physics (*Ad Helv.* 11, 6; *Ep. Mor.* 79, 12; 102, 28).

23.2 exire atque erumpere...vagi per omnes

The vocabulary here is typical of that which Seneca uses to contrast the narrow limited life of earth and broad and exhilarating life beyond. Adjectives and adverbs derived from *angustus* are uses to describe the philosopher's judgement of this life (*N.Q.* I, *praef.* 13 "*Tunc contemnit (sc. animus) domicilii prioris angustias*"; also *Ep. Mor.* 65, 24; 120, 15; *Brev. Vit.* 14, 1). The soul's desire is "*erumpere et exire*" (*Ep. Mor.* 70, 24). The soul of Polybius' brother released from the body exults '*gestit*' (*Ad Polyb.* 9, 3) and is described as wandering '*vagatur*' freely in the heavenly regions (*ibid.* 9, 8) as, says Seneca, is the delight of virtue (*N.Q.* I, *praef.* 7).

Platon

This form of the nominative is used quite regularly by Seneca, (*De Ben.* 4, 33, 1; 5, 7, 5; 6, 18, 1; *Ep. Mor.* 6, 6; 44, 4; 47, 12; 108, 38) but not as Favez suggests (*op. cit.* p. 91) to the almost complete exclusion by him of the more usual Latin form *Plato* for which Busa and Zampolli cite fifteen examples (*Concordantiae Senecanae,* Hildesheim, 1975).

sapientis animum totum in mortem prominere

Plato argued that because the philosopher aims to see the truth by the mind, unimpeded by the faulty senses of the body, his whole life is directed towards the separation of soul from body which is what he believed happened at death. Thus he could argue that having spent life trying to achieve a state as near as possible to death, he would not be troubled by death but accept it gladly (*Phaedo* 64A, 67D-E). Cicero argues on the same basic principle that we should in this life separate ourselves from the body and grow accustomed to die, so that our souls when released will find their upward flight less impeded (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 31, 75).

23.3 The theme of *laus mortui* is again introduced and combined with the theme that the end naturally follows complete achievement (for which see 21.4 and note). Seneca places his praise of Metilius at the beginning of the section dealing with Marcia's situation and towards the close of that dealing with Metilius, thus achieving a loose structural symmetry between the sections.

honores sine ambitione

Seneca does not mention any magistracy held by Metilius, which is surely, in a consolatory context, evidence that he held none, but his phraseology here suggests strongly that Metilius intended to pursue a senatorial career.

Quicquid ad summum pervenit ab exitu prope est

The idea that destruction followed hard upon maturity was a rhetorical commonplace. Seneca is probably recalling a sententia of Albucius Silus "*Quidquid ad summum pervenit, incremento non reliquit locum* (Sen., *Suas.* 1, 3).

eripit se aufertque...in primo maturuerunt

Consolatory writers made much of the idea that premature death was inclined to follow the virtuous, and therefore was to be regarded as a sign of divine favour. Plutarch in doing so supported his statement by the traditional stories of the poets, illustrating by quotation from Homer (*Odyss.* XV, 245-6) the belief that those pre-eminent and sprung from the Gods died before old age (*Ad Apoll.* 111B) and citing with approval Menander's statement "ὃν οἱ θεοὶ φιλοῦσιν ἀποθνήσκει νέος." The Elder Pliny (*N.H.* XXI, 2) finds in the short bloom of flowers an illustration of the truth "*quae spectatissime floreant, celerrime marcescere.*"

23.5 Fabianus

Papirius Fabianus was a philosophic writer of the early first century A.D. who in his younger days had been a pupil of the rhetorician Arellius

Fuscus, and had won quite a reputation in declamation. Turning to philosophy he pruned away the extravagance of the declamatory style and in his search for simplicity may have become a little obscure in his brevitas. This at least we might judge from the criticism of the Elder Seneca (*Contr.* II, 1, 2) and the lengthy defence of his style which the younger Seneca undertakes (*Ep. Mor.* 100, 1-9). He wrote on political questions, on animals, and on natural questions, the *Causae Naturales* being at least three books. The Elder Seneca suggests that his style was well suited to such subjects (*Contr.* II, *praef.* 3, "*locorum habitus fluminumque decursus et urbium situs moresque populorum nemo descripsit abundantius*). The younger Seneca alludes to one of his theories about the way in which a world flood might develop (*N.Q.* III, 27, 3.). His admiration for Fabianus is quite clear, not only from this passage and his defence of his style, but also by his descriptions of him as '*vir egregius et vita et scientia*' (*Ep. Mor.* 40, 12) and "*non cx his cathedrariis philosophis sed ex veris et antiquis* (*Brev. Vit.* 10, 1).

indicium imminentis exitii nimia maturitas est;

Pliny the elder quotes a sententia of similar import going back to Cato the Censor (*N.H.* 7, 171 "*Cato ad filium de validis quoque observationem ut ex oraculo aliquo prodiderit senilem iuventam praematurae mortis esse signum*).

24.1 virtutibus illum non annis aestimare

This injunction is the natural conclusion to which the arguments in 21, 4 and 23, 3-5 lead. It was found particularly useful in consolatory contexts where the deceased was young though Cicero discusses it in a more general context (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 109 "*Nemo parum diu vixit qui virtutis perfectae perfecto functus est munere*). Plutarch uses the argument to console Apollonius on the death of his son (*Ad Apoll.* 111A "ὡς οὐχ ὁ μακρότατος βίος ἄριστος ἀλλ' ὁ σπουδαιότατος") and Seneca gives the theme full treatment in a letter discussing the death at a comparatively young age of the philosopher Metronax (*Ep. Mor.* 93).

Pupillus relictus

The most natural assumption is that Metilius' father had died and appointed tutors to his son by will, though this involves taking the reference '*iam patri praesidium*' at 17, 1 as general rather than relating to Metilius in particular (see note ad loc.). As Gaius states the law on the matter parents were allowed to appoint by will tutors responsible for the supervision of the affairs of a child who was still a minor. In the case of males this tutorship ceased when they reached the age of puberty (Gaius, *Inst.* I, 144-5). In the

case of a boy this was presumably fourteen, the age at which he was allowed to make a will. We have no knowledge of who Metilius' tutors were.

sub matris tutela semper

Adolescentes possessed in strict legal theory an absolute legal capacity except in lawsuits ("*Inviti adolescentes curatores non accipiunt praeterquam in litem*" Just. *Dig.* I, 23, 2) but in practice most people in this position had a curator. The reason for this was that the *lex Plaetoria* provided that anyone who had taken advantage of an *adolescens* was subject to a criminal prosecution and hence there was a widespread unwillingness to be involved in dealings with such a person unrepresented by someone older. (On this whole subject, see R. W. Leage, *Roman Private Law,* London 1924, pp. 98-113.) However the technical term for such a relationship was *cura* rather than *tutela*, and it is likely that Seneca is referring to the general protection and care offered by Marcia to her son rather than any specifically legal relationship.

militiam recusavit ne a te discederet

If, as this reference suggests, Metilius had not seen service as a military tribune, considerable doubt must be cast on the often repeated statement that he must have died before reaching the minimum age for the quaestorship and entry to the senate. Although Mrs Griffin (*op. cit.* p. 46, n. 4) has shown that there were senators in the Julio-Claudian period who omitted this part of the career structure, a military tribunate was still the norm, and Seneca who may not have held this post began his career very late. Favez (*op. cit.*, p. 94) pertinently comments that Roman values must have changed considerably. One can hardly imagine Cicero, let alone any of the traditional figures of Roman legend, praising a young man who refused military service to stay at home with his mother, even though he does mention "*pietate in matrem*" as one of Scipio Aemilianus' good qualities (*De Amic.* 11).

24.2 excellentis ingeni...obstitisset verecundia

The implication is that Metilius had the literary ability to produce works of the same quality as his grandfather Cremutius Cordus, and his failure to publish anything was explained by his modesty. *Verecundia* is quality of Metilius which Seneca takes pains to emphasise (19.6 *verecundae aures*).

24.3 in tam magna feminarum turba viros corrumpentium

Seneca makes repeated reference to the wanton and promiscuous behaviour of the women of his generation. In writing to his mother he con-

trasts her modesty and that of his aunt with the '*impudicitia*' and '*petulantia*' of many of their contemporaries (*Ad Helv.* 16, 3; 19, 2), and in his letters complains that the enthusiasm of women for the once distinctively masculine vices of gluttony and lust has exposed them to baldness and gout, diseases once confined to men (*Ep. Mor.* 95, 20-21). This portrait of the degeneracy of contemporary women has much in common with that given by writers of satire. Martial, for example, complains that no woman is chaste who is asked to be otherwise (*Epig.* 4, 71) and that women's attempts to attract men continue to an age long past what is fitting (*ibid* 10, 90). Petronius likewise complains of noble women only interested in low-class men, and serving women only available to men of high social status (*Sat.* 126, 5-11; on this whole subject see J. P. Sullivan, *The Satyricon of Petronius,* London, 1968, pp. 119-125).

puer admodum...materna sine dubio suffragatione

There is no way to determine, to what priesthood, in what year or at what age Metilius was appointed. Buresch (*op. cit.* p. 112) has shown that the word *puer* can simply mean young man, citing appositely the way in which Seneca says at one time that he studied under Sotion as a *puer* (*Ep. Mor.* 49, 2) at another as *iuvenis* (*Ep. Mor.* 108, 17). Nevertheless Caesar was only thirteen when appointed flamen Dialis by Marius. It is often held that Metilius' priesthood could not have been conferred under Tiberius because of the disfavour in which the family of Cremutius Cordus was held after 25 A.D., (so Lipsius, Buresch, Bourgery, Herrmann, *op. cit.*) but *materna suffragatione* suggests that Marcia's *amicitia* with Livia may have been influential (4, 2) and that a priesthood before 25 is possible. Moreover Giancotti (*Cronologia dei Dialoghi di Seneca,* Turin 1957, pp. 54-58) has sensibly pointed out both that Metilius is more likely to have been considered the son of his father rather than a member of the familia of his maternal grandfather. Giancotti further suggests that an appointment for Metilius after 31 could be regarded as part of an anti-Sejanian reaction, whilst there is ample evidence that there was no persecution of the families of those executed under Tiberius (see Z. Stewart, *op. cit.*).

24.5 Seneca turns back at this point to describe the fate of Metilius' soul which he had begun to discuss at 23.1-2.

Imago dumtaxat filii...ipse quidem aeternus

For the thought that the true self is not the body, but the mind, we may compare Cicero's statement (*De Rep.* VI, 26) "*sic habeto non esse te mortalem sed corpus hoc, nec enim tu is es quem forma ista declarat; sed mens cuiusque is est*

quisque;". The concept is originally Platonic, for Socrates argues in the first *Alcibiades* (130C) "ὅτι ἡ ψυχή ἐστιν ἄνθρωπος;" (see also *Phaedo* 115Cff. and *Laws* 959A-B) and was used in a quasi-consolatory context in the pseudo-Platonic *Axiochus* (365e) "ἡμεῖς μὲν γάρ ἐσμεν ψυχή, ζῷον ἀθάνατον, ἐν θνητῷ καθειργμένον φρουρίῳ."

despoliatus oneribus alienis

The concept of the body as a burden, *onus* or *sarcina* was commonplace in Seneca's day and closely linked with the concept of it as a chain or prison (see infra). It is found in the declaimer Arellius Fuscus (Sen., *Suas.* 6,6) and Seneca also makes regular use of it (*Ad Helv.* 11,6; *Ep. Mor.* 65, 16; 102, 25).

Haec quae vides...vincula animorum tenebraeque sunt

Plato refers to the concept of the body as a prison for the soul in the *Phaedo* (62B) "ὡς ἔν τινι φρουρᾷ ἐσμεν οἱ ἄνθρωποι" arguing on that basis that men must not try to depart without God's consent. In the *Cratylus* (400C) he names the Orphic poets as the likely source for the idea that the soul is in an enclosure undergoing punishment. The presence of the metaphor in the *Axiochus* (365e) has been demonstrated above, and in Roman philosophic writings was used frequently in conjunction with the concepts of the heavenly origin of the soul and its ultimate return there. (Cic. *De Rep.* VI, 14; *De Div.* I, 110; *Tusc. Disp.* I, 118; "*emittique nos e custodia et levari vinclis arbitremur ut aut in aeternam et plane in nostram domum remigremus aut...*"). The thought became a commonplace and was used by such declaimers as Arellius Fuscus (Sen. *Suas.* 6, 6) and by Virgil (*Aen.* VI, 734). Seneca finds the concept helpful and makes ready use of it (*Ad Polyb.* 9, 3; 9, 8; *Ep. Mor.* 65, 16 and 21; 76, 25; *N.Q.* I, *praef.* 11; *Ad Helv.* 11, 7 "*Corpusculum hoc custodia et vinculum animi*").

Likewise the use of the metaphor of darkness to describe life in the body, linked by Virgil (*loc. cit.*) with the metaphor of a prison, is frequently employed by Seneca both in conjunction with the metaphors of prison and chains (*Ep. Mor.* 79, 12) and independently (*Ep. Mor.* 102, 28; *N.Q.* III, *praef.* 11).

cum hac gravi carne certamen est

Abel (*Poseidonios* pp. 230-31) has argued that the use of the word *carne* suggests a Posidonian origin for the general conception of the soul and its future life which Seneca describes. He cites as evidence *Ep. Mor.* 92, 10 where the remark "*huic (sc. virtuti) committitur inutilis caro et fluida*" is attributed to Posidonius. While it is true that Cicero uses the word *corpus* rather than *caro* in contrasting body and soul (cf. *Tusc. Disp.* V, 27), the

Greek word behind both usages would be σάρξ. The different choice of words is simply a matter of taste, and Seneca quite regularly uses *caro* where there is no necessity to postulate a Posidonian origin for his statement (*Ep. Mor.* 65, 22; 74, 16; 102, 25; 121, 21).

25.1 Proinde non est quod ad sepulcrum fili tui curras

This advice was probably necessary, as the Romans attached great importance to proper disposal of the remains, the erection of a tomb and regular offerings made there. Wills leave elaborate instructions for the maintenance of meals and offerings by the grave, and we find epitaphs containing such requests as

> Quisquis heris post me dominus laris huius et orti
> vicinas mihi carpe rosas mihi lilia plena pone
> candida quae viridis dabit ortulus.
>
> (Buecheler *C.E.L.* 578)

As Lattimore makes clear the survivors regarded the tomb as a source of consolation (*op. cit.* pp. 222-30, see also J. M. C. Toynbee, *op. cit.* pp. 61-64). It was common for philosophers to deprecate this concern amongst their follows, either on the grounds that the soul had departed (as Socrates argues in Plato, *Phaedo* 115C-E) or that one who was completely annihilated could suffer no harm (as the Epicureans, cf. Lucretius *D.R.N.* III, 870-93, and Diogenes of Oenoanda *fr.* 16). Nevertheless Plato found it wise to compromise to some extent with popular feeling, suggesting in the *Laws* (959B-E) that while extravagances should be avoided, a member of the highest property owning class should be allowed to spend up to five minas on funeral expenditure.

Seneca's feeling that concern about funerals and monuments was foolish recurs in his writings. He criticises as childish those who arrange for themselves "*magnas moles sepulcrorum...et ad rogum munera et ambitiosas exsequias*" (*Brev. Vit.* 20, 5) and in the letters (*Ep. Mor.* 92, 34-5) suggests that the fate of the corpse is of no importance, quoting with approval Maecenas' words "*nec tumulum curo; sepelit natura relictos*". That this was the result of his personal convictions rather than conformity with general philosophic attitudes is strongly suggested by the arrangements for his own funeral. Tacitus tells us that he was cremated without any funeral rite, and that he had given instructions for this to be done when he was at the height of his power (*Ann.* XV, 64).

non magis illius partes quam vestes aliaque tegimenta corporum

Empedocles first compared the body to a garment which covered the real self (*fr.* 126, Diels, *Vorsokr,* 2nd Ed., Berlin, 1906, p. 210) and

Euripides makes Herakles describe his birth in the terms "ἐπεὶ δὲ σαρκὸς περιβόλαι' ἐκτησάμεν" (*Herakl. Main* 1269). The concept soon became linked to arguments about immortality. In the *Phaedo* (87B ff.) Cebes uses the comparison of the garment to suggest that just as a man can wear out many clothes, but his last clothes can survive him, so might a soul wear out many bodies, but eventually perish along with one. Amongst the Romans Lucretius felt that it was an argument against immortality that a dying man felt as though he were being dissolved rather than sloughing off an outer garment, like a snake. However Seneca makes wide use of the comparison to suggest the immortality of the soul, (*Ep. Mor.* 92, 13; 102, 25, "*haec circumiecta, novissimum velamentum tui, cutis.*") In a consolatory context Plutarch also draws the comparison to suggest that in the next life equitable judgement will be possible for the first time, for then the veil of flesh which hinders the judge and prevents the judged being completely seen will be removed (*Ad Apoll.* 121B).

paulum supra nos commoratus...omnem mortalis aevi excutit

The belief that after death souls underwent a period of purgation is found in the eschatological myths of Plato (*Phaedo* 113E-114A; *Gorgias* 524Eff.; *Rep.* X, 614Aff). The teaching of the myth of Er that purgation was a preparation not for heaven but for rebirth is strongly suggestive of a Pythagorean origin for the doctrine (see E. R. Dodds, Plato, *Gorgias,* Oxford 1959, pp. 373-4). It is in such a form that the doctrine is found in the *Aeneid* (VI, 738-45) although there all souls as opposed to those generally recognised as guilty suffer their due.

The doctrine here however is somewhat different, for the short period of purgation is a prelude to eternal life for the soul (or rather life lasting until the ἐκπύρωσις). It is short both because of Metilius' good qualities and his short life. The physical principles on which the soul's elevation takes place are those of the Stoics (outlined in notes to 23.1). The *Somnium Scipionis* closes with a similar exposition of the relationship between the moral qualities of the life led upon earth with the ability of the soul to rise aloft to its original abode (*De Rep.* VI, 29 "*Nam eorum animi qui se corporis voluptatibus dediderunt, earumque se quasi ministros praebuerunt, impulsuque libidinum voluptatibus oboedientium deorum et hominum iura violaverunt; corporibus elapsi circum terram ipsam volutantur, nec hunc in locum nisi multis exagitati saeculis revertuntur.*" It is very difficult to know how widely this doctrine of purification was held by Stoic teachers. Tertullian says of the Stoics "*prudentes animas circa terram prosternant cum illas a sapientibus multo superioribus erudiri adfirment*" (*De Anima* 54 = *S.V.F.* I, 147) but it is not clear whether he had found

evidence for this belief in any Stoic writer before Seneca. Abel (*Poseidonios* p. 233) has argued that this doctrine is of Posidonian origin but he is forced to admit that there is no clear surviving evidence which attributes the doctrine to the Apamean. He suggests that the essential pre-condition is there in the statement attributed by Cicero to Posidonius "*plenus aër sit immortalium animorum*" (*De Div.* I, 64). However Pease, (Cicero *De Divinatione*, ed Pease, Reprint Darmstadt 1963, pp. 296-7) suggests that the *animi* are δαίμονες rather than spirits of the deceased.

Plutarch (*De Facie quae in orbe lunae apparet* 943C) draws a distinction similar to that implicit in Seneca's description where all souls wander in the sublunary sphere, but not for the same time, the unjust paying a severe penalty but the good spending only so long as is necessary to purge away the evil necessarily contracted by association with the body. However R. M. Jones (*The Platonism of Plutarch,* Chicago 1916, pp. 51-56, cited by R. Hoven, *op. cit.* p. 97) has demonstrated that it is impossible to regard Posidonius as a general source for the *De Facie.* In fact, given the Stoic world picture in which Seneca thought, it is difficult to see why it should be necessary to find a particular source for these concepts, as he was certainly acquainted with the literary elaborations of an after-life as made by Cicero and Vergil.

25.2 coetus sacer, Scipiones Catonesque

In suggesting those amongst the heavenly souls who will receive Metilius, Seneca acknowledges his debt to Cicero by naming the Scipiones and calling the *Somnium* to mind. Cato is mentioned at this point as the archetype of the virtues, the Roman equivalent of Socrates, and the use of the plural form brings to mind also the resolution of the ancestor of Cato Uticensis, Cato the Censor (on this Abel, *Poseidonios* p. 223).

inter contemptores vitae et beneficio suo liberos

suo is the emendation of Gertz which makes good sense in the context of the suicides of Cordus and Cato Uticensis, and *beneficio* with no epithet makes little sense.

Parallels for the meaning "the service they rendered themselves" can be found in the *Epistulae Morales* (20, 7; 53, 11; 80, 1 cited by Reynolds *ad loc.*). However, the reading *beneficio mortis,* found in two Palatine manuscripts (1539 and 1541), while certainly a scribal conjecture, is also supported by Senecan parallels, one from this *consolatio* (*Ad Marc.* 20, 3; *Ep. Mor.* 24, 11 cited by Reynolds *ad loc.*). Such a reading would include the Scipiones and Cato the Censor and hence it is impossible to be sure that Seneca intended to refer specifically to suicides.

If Seneca is making such a reference he is following Stoic doctrine (see notes on 19.6 *Excessit filius...* and 20.3 *licet uno gradu ad libertatem transire*) in marked distinction to Platonic teaching on the subject (*Phaedo* 61C "οὐ μέντοι ἴσως βιάσεται αὑτόν· οὐ γάρ φασι θεμιτὸν εἶναι", also *ibid.* 62B) which Cicero follows in the *Somnium.* (*De Rep.* VI, 15 "*quare et tibi, Publi, et piis omnibus retinendus animus est in custodia corporis nec iniussu eius, a quo ille est vobis datus, ex hominum vita migrandum est.*")

Ille nepotem suum

This is exactly the same situtation as in the *Somnium* where Scipio Africanus (admittedly in a dream-situation) undertakes the instruction of his grandson Scipio Aemilianus.

illic omnibus omne cognatum est

The kinship of all humanity was always implicit in the Stoic concept of man who, they believed, ultimately derived his reason from the divinity. It is probable that among the early Stoics this kinship was extended explicitly to the wise though later Stoics and Cicero and Seneca among the Romans were inclined to broaden the circle to include all who were not totally devoid of good qualities (*D.L.* VII, 33; Cic. *De Fin.* III, 63 "*...oporteat hominem ab homine ob id ipsum quod homo sit non alienum videri*"; *De Off.* I, 22; on the development of Stoic thought in this respect, see H. C. Baldry, *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought,* Cambridge 1965, pp. 152-203). The emphasis on what goes on in the life beyond, *illic,* as opposed to here, can thus be explained either by the assimilation of Cremutius, Metilius and their fellow dwellers in the heavenly places to *sapientes,* (see note *supra*) or simply by regarding the general quality of life there as representing what would ideally be achieved on earth, but in practice is not.

nova luce gaudentem

Both Cicero and Seneca lay repeated stress on the much superior quality of light enjoyed in the heavenly places (Cic. *De Rep.* VI, 16; Sen. *Ep. Mor.* 102, 28, "*Imaginare tecum quantus ille sit fulgor tot sideribus inter se lumen miscentibus.*") This brighter light is frequently contrasted with the *caligo* which impedes perception on earth (Cic. *Tusc. Disp.* I, 45; Sen. *Ad Polyb.* 9, 8).

vicinorum siderum meatus...libens ducit

The study of the heavenly bodies was regarded as the prime occupation of the souls of sages in many Roman Stoic and Platonic pictures of the after-life (Cic. *De Rep.* VI, 17ff.; Sen. *Ad Polyb.* 9, 8; *Ep. Mor.* 102, 28). Just as the contrast between earthly and heavenly light is stressed, so is the difference between the partial knowledge available to earthly seekers after

truth and the complete knowledge of the sage who has departed this life (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 45-6; *Ep. Mor.* 102, 28; *Ad Polyb.* 9, 3 "*divina vero, quorum rationem tam diu frustra quaesierat, propius intuetur.*")

in profunda terrarum...ex alto relicta

Some addition is required to the reading of the mss. *iuvat* and Hermes' conjecture *iubet* is widely accepted. Cordus is subject to the conjectural verb while *iuvat* is used impersonally. The partitive construction in *profunda terrarum* is of a type mainly confined to poetry, though instances after a non-quantitative neuter are also found in Sallust and Tacitus (see L. R. Palmer, *The Latin Language,* London 1954, p. 291).

Although Seneca suggests here that the inhabitants of heaven look back on what they have left with no great desire to return, their concern for the things of earth and the fate of their descendants seems somewhat greater than that attributed to them by Cicero in the *Somnium* where Africanus twice suggests to his grandson that he should not be so concerned with earthly things (*Rep.* VI, 17 and 19). Vergil however in his picture of Elysium had shown Anchises acutely concerned about the welfare of his offspring and the Roman people (*Aen.* VI, 679ff.).

25.3 sub oculis patris filiique posita

At the outset of his work (2, 1) Seneca had suggested that exempla might be most effective in influencing Marcia's behaviour, and at the close he returns to people dear to her in the hope that she might follow what Seneca portrays as their true wishes.

mutatos in melius tuos flere

Seneca makes particular use of the thought that it is selfish to mourn those who are now in a better condition than they enjoyed during their earthly lives. As he writes to Polybius (9.3) "*Beatum deflere invidia est.*"

non illos interfusa maria...incertarum vada Syrtium

In depicting the heavenly life of souls, their freedom of vision unfettered by geographical barriers is commonly emphasised. Cicero argues that if it is a splendid thing to see such sights as the straits of the Hellespont, how much more marvellous would it be to have a view of the whole earth, its site, shape and circumference (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 45). Likewise in the *Somnium* he points out how much of the earth's surface is unknown to the Romans (*Rep.* VI, 21-22).

omnia ibi plana

The mss. readings of *omnium plana* A and *omnia plana* γ are difficult because of the abrupt transition from the region as subject to its

inhabitants. This makes the conjecture of Waltz *omnia plana habent* very attractive, though the difficulty involved in explaining how the verb dropped out perhaps makes it preferable to adopt the suggestion of Gertz *omnia ibi plana.*

26.1 Puta...dicere

Seneca concludes the work with a προσωποποιία of Cremutius Cordus. He is particularly fond of this device (see notes to 4.3 "*Hic, ut opinor...*" and 17.6 "*Dicit omnibus nobis natura.*" which was considered particularly suitable for use in the peroration of a legal defence (Quint., *Inst. Or.* VI, 1, 25-6). It is worth remembering that in the exordium Seneca had pictured himself as an advocate defending *fortuna* (Abel, *Bauformen* p. 42).

To introduce a speech by a dead person was regarded by the rhetoricians as a perfectly legitimate use of this device (Quint. *Inst. Or.* IX, 2, 31 "*et inferos excitare concessum est*") which Cicero had, of course used in the *Somnium.* We may notice how Seneca puts in Cremutius' mouth the same description of his work and fortune and some of the arguments which Seneca has earlier used in his own persona.

ex illa arce caelesti

Many attempts were made in antiquity to localise the heavenly abode of departed spirits. In the *Somnium* (*Rep.*VI, 16) Cicero follows a popular conception adopted by some Pythagoreans in suggesting the Milky Way, but in the *Tusculan Disputations* (I, 43) is content in placing them beyond the earth's atmosphere where they find an atmosphere of their own consistency. Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. Math.* IX, 73) and Porphyry suggest the circle of the moon. According to St Augustine (*De Civ. Dei* VII, 6) Varro assigned the sphere behind the circle of the moon and the highest clouds to the souls of "*heroas et lares et genios*". Seneca however is content to leave the place vague, using along with the current description such phrases as '*ad excelsa*' (25.1) and '*in summo*' (25.3). In writing to Polybius his disinterest in attempts at too great precision is aptly demonstrated by his use of the phrase "*in eum emicuit locum quisquis ille est*" (*Ad Polyb.* 9, 8).

quo civilia bella deflevit, quo proscribentis in aeternum ipse proscripsit.

We can guess what Cremutius' attitude to the proscriptions of Antony, Octavian and Lepidus was from the remark in his *Annales* which his accusers brought up against him, that he approved Brutus' description of Cassius as the last of the Romans (Tac. *Ann.* IV, 34, see also notes on 1). Seneca uses the rhetorical device of *traiectio* with the verb *proscribo* to pro-

duce the type of sententious expression beloved of the declaimers. The phrase recalls Arellius Fuscus' comment on Cicero "*uno proscriptus saeculo proscribes Antonium omnibus*" (in Sen., *Suas.* 7.8, cited in A. D. Leeman, *Orationis Ratio* p. 252). Appian (4, 96-7) puts into the mouth of Cassius a speech in which he roundly condemns the proscriptions, in all probability using Cremutius Cordus as his source. (See Suerbaum *op. cit.*, p. 85).

26.2 Seneca builds up the rhetorical effects of this peroratio by the device of *repetitio,* beginning two sentences with *cur* and the *traiectio* of *integer* at the beginning of consecutive phrases '*integro domus statu integer ipse*'.

Reges ne tibi nominem...cervice deformatos

The basic point here is exactly the same as that made by the examples in 20, 4-6, and if the earlier examples had not included kings, Favez nevertheless rightly points out (*op. cit.* p. 100) that the description of *Romanos duces* calls to mind Pompey among the earlier group, while the phrase *nobilissimos viros...deformatos* may be recalling Livy's description of Cicero's death (in Sen. *Suas.* 6, 17 "*Prominenti ex lectica praebentique immotam cervicem caput praecisum est.*")

26.3 avum tuum

We have no knowledge of who Marcia's grandfather was, or what his fate, except for Seneca's remarks here.

cibo prohibitus: cf. 22.6 "*a cena...abstinuit*" and Tac. *Ann.* IV, 35, 5 "*vitam abstinentia finivit...*".

tam magno me quam videbar animo scripsisse.

The manuscript reading A, *quam magno me quam vibar animo scripsisse,* is clearly impossible, and there is wide agreement on the emendation of the first *quam* to *tam* and *vibar* to *videbar.* The conjecture of Haase involves least emendation to the mss tradition, but certainty is impossible and the suggestions of Gertz "*tam magno me quam infausto animo scripsisse*" and Favez "*tam magno me perisse animo quam videbar scripsisse*" draw a sensible parallel between bold writings and bravery in meeting their consequences which fits in well with the attributes Seneca gives to Cremutius. Waltz' suggestion of *vivebam* rather than *videbar* combines this comparison of words and life with minimal emendation to the manuscripts.

nil apud vos, ut putatis, optabile

The *Somnium* provides a striking parallel for this characterisation of earthly life by a heaven-dweller in the remark of Africanus about the sublunary region (*De Rep.* VI, 17) "*Infra autem iam nihil est nisi mortale et caducum praeter animos munere deorum hominum generi datos.*"

26.4 nulla hic arma...in publico medioque vitam

The description of the peace and harmony of heavenly life follows the pattern of Utopian descriptions in antiquity. Sometimes such Utopian characterisations are placed in the past in the golden age, as when Seneca's Hippolytus says (*Phaedra* 531-5)

non vasto aggere
crebraque turre cinxerant urbes latus
non arma saeva miles aptabat manu
nec torta clausas fregerat saxo gravi
ballista portas.

We may cite similar passages in Lucretius, (*D.R.N.* V, 999-1000) and Vergil (*Aen.*, VIII, 324-5). It is, however, pressing the evidence too far to see in this passage, with Oltramare (*op. cit.* p. 286), a reference to the popular philosophic doctrine that the wise man will have nothing to do with war, or with Abel (*Poseidonios* pp. 224 to 233f.) a reference in the phrase "*detectas mentes et aperta praecordia*" to the Poseidonian doctrine of the uninterrupted communication of bodiless spirits through direct contact (for which see introductory note to ch. 23).

26.5 unius saeculi facta.

Both the references to Cremutius' fatal remarks (Tac., *Ann.* IV, 34-35; Suet., *Tib.* 61, 3; and Dio Cassius 57, 24, 2-4) and the fragment of his work surviving in the Elder Seneca dealing with Cicero's death (*Suas.* 6, 19) come from the period following closely on Caesar's death, but we have no precise knowledge of the period covered by Cremutius' historical writings.

in parte ultima mundi et inter paucissimos gesta

Seneca has already described the spatial extent of the earth as '*punctum*' (21.2) and when Cicero makes Africanus describe the earth from the heavens, he points out what a small portion of that is occupied by the Roman Empire. The Northern inhabitable zone in which the Roman Empire is located is only one of five zones, and even within that its sphere of influence is limited to the west of the Caucasus and the Ganges and does not reach the most northerly or southerly inhabitants (*De Rep.* VI, 21-22). The perspective of the heavens is used by both Cicero and Seneca to diminish the more grandiose views Romans often held of their dominions.

licet surrectura, lices ruitura regna prospicere...

For the comparison of the fate of cities and kingdoms with that of individuals in consolatory contexts, see 21.1 *Conputa urbium saecula* and note.

26.6 Nam si tibi potest solacio esse...

Seneca here makes Cremutius describe the periodic destructions which shake the earth's surface and change it, events of the sort described in Strabo, *Geog.* 1, 3, 3-4, 10, and 16-20, and Pliny *N.H.* II, 81, 191-94, 206, such as earthquakes, eruptions, tidal waves and floods. This description precedes a description of the general conflagration of the whole universe which begins *Et cum tempus.* Elsewhere Seneca refers to these general disasters to show that we have no reason to suppose that individuals (*Ad Polyb.* 1, 1-3) or even cities (*Ep. Mor.* 91, 11-12) should be exempt from the law of mortality which applies to all things as we see them. Both of these descriptions are in consolatory contexts. While it is open to Marcia to draw such an interpretation, Seneca's thought is here centred upon the superiority of the life enjoyed by the *felices animae* amongst whom Cremutius and Metilius are numbered, the same conclusion as is drawn from these events by Cicero (*De Rep.* VI, 23) in a work which must have been one of the models on which the *prosopopeia* of Cremutius is based.

et inundationibus quicquid habitatur obducet.

The floods to which Seneca here refers are of the sort which may occur a number of times between ἐκπυρώσεις. Seneca describes the destruction of the inhabited world by flood at some length in the *Naturales Quaestiones* (III, 27, 1-30, 8). However while both Plato (*Timaeus* 22C) and Aristotle (in Censorinus 18.11) had seen destructions by flood as a counterbalance to destruction by fire in the cycle of cosmic history (P. Boyancé, *Études sur le songe de Scipion,* pp. 164-166), even in the form developed in *Naturales Quaestiones* the flood was not for the Stoics an event on the same plane as the conflagration, and here floods are simply one group of the many disasters which occur during a cosmic cycle (cf. F. H. Sandbach, *The Stoics,* London 1975, p. 79).

quo se mundus renovaturus extinguat.

Seneca here refers to the general conflagration or ἐκπύρωσις which took place at the end of each cosmic cycle when the fiery breath or divine fire re-absorbed all things into itself. After this re-absorption the divine fire would proceed to create from itself a world which would follow exactly the same cycle as the one before (*S. V.F.* I, 109; II, 593, 596-7, 599, 623, 625 and 627) or display only very slight differences (*S. V.F.* II, 624 and 626). This theory of an eternal cycle of world-events was held by Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus (René Hoven, *op. cit.* pp. 32-37 and references given there to *S. V.F.*) and although doubted by Diogenes of Babylon, (*S. V.F.* III, *Diog. Bab.* 27) and rejected by Boethus of Sidon (*S. V.F.* III, *Boeth.* 7) and

Panaetius (Cic., *De Nat. De.* II, 46, 118), the doctrine was clearly accepted in the later Stoicism of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius. Seneca compares the sapiens when solitary or absorbed in his own thoughts to the fire at this stage of the world-process (*Ep. Mor.* 9, 16) showing how far the concept is an integral part of his thought pattern.

26.7 Nos quoque...in antiqua elementa vertemur

Seneca here follows traditional Stoic doctrine in limiting any future life of the soul to the time of the ἐκπύρωσις. Cleanthes had allowed all souls to survive until such time, Chrysippus only those of the wise (*D.L.* VII, 157 = *S. V.F.* I, 522 and II, 811) but since we are here talking of a select group, *felices animae* it is impossible to suggest precisely what teaching Seneca was following. That this limitation of future life was general in Stoicism is clear from what Cicero says (*Tusc. Disp.* I, 32, 78) "*eos* [sc. Stoicos] *qui aiunt manere animos cum e corpore excesserint, sed non semper.*" Seneca is not always consistent in his acceptance of such a limitation and sometimes his language suggests that '*aeternus*' is used in the more conventional sense of 'unlimited' (*Ad Helv.* 11, 7; 20, 2; *Ad Polyb.* 9, 7; *Ep. Mor.* 102, 23 sqq; and René Hoven, *op. cit.* p. 120).

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